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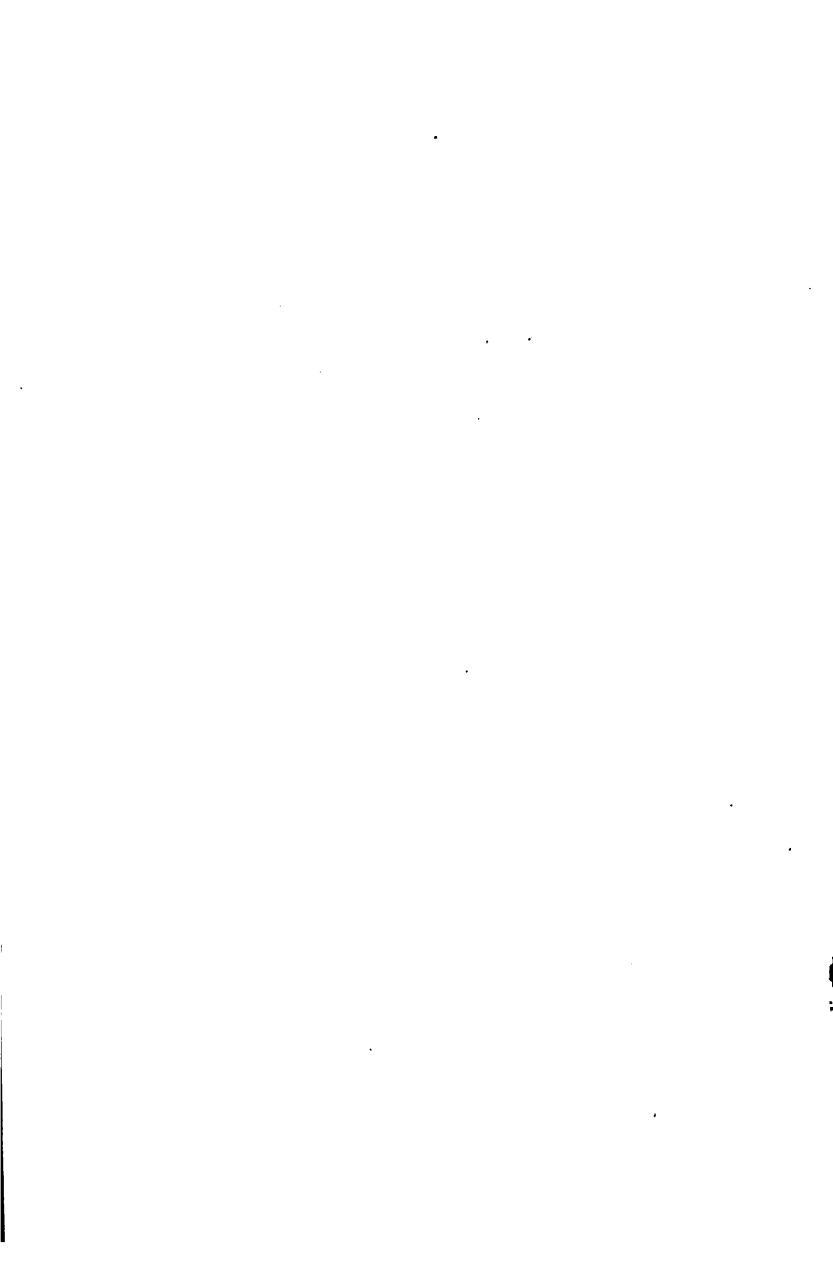
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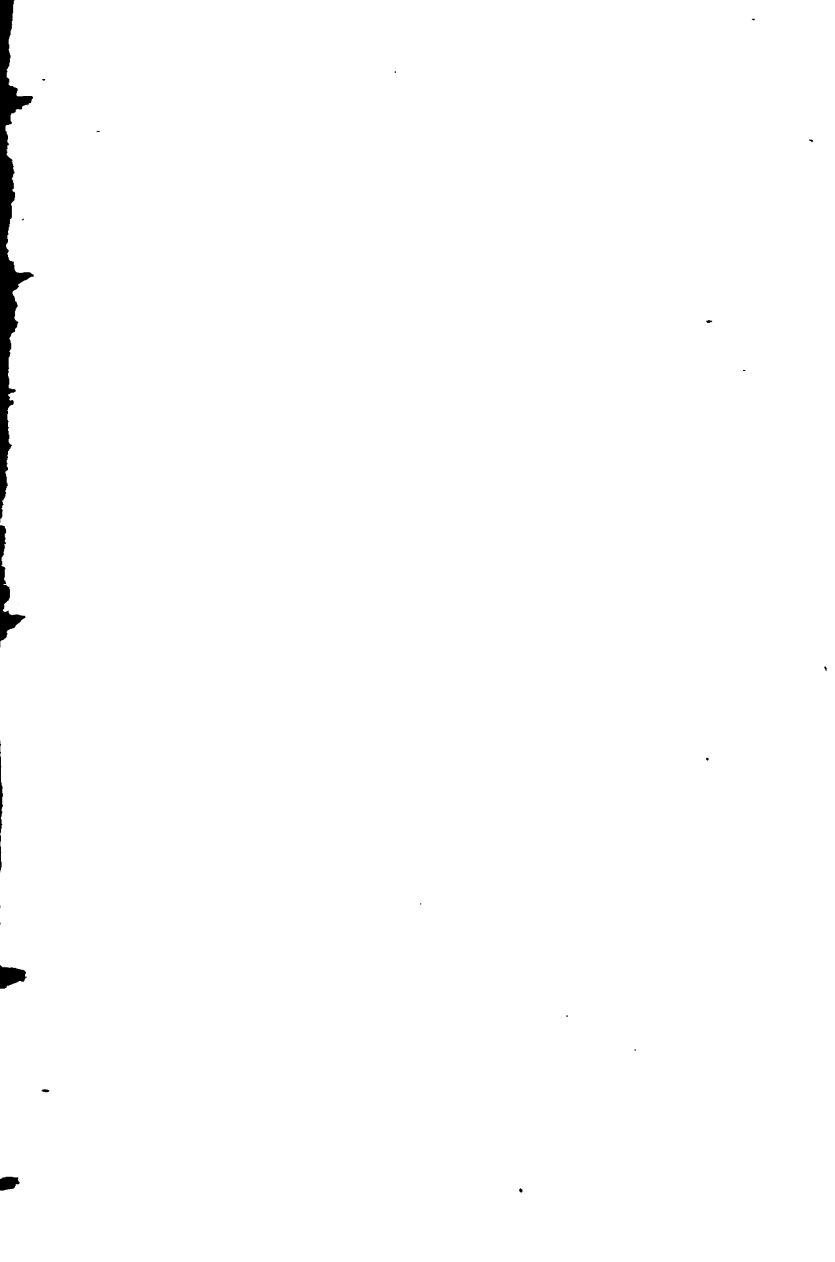
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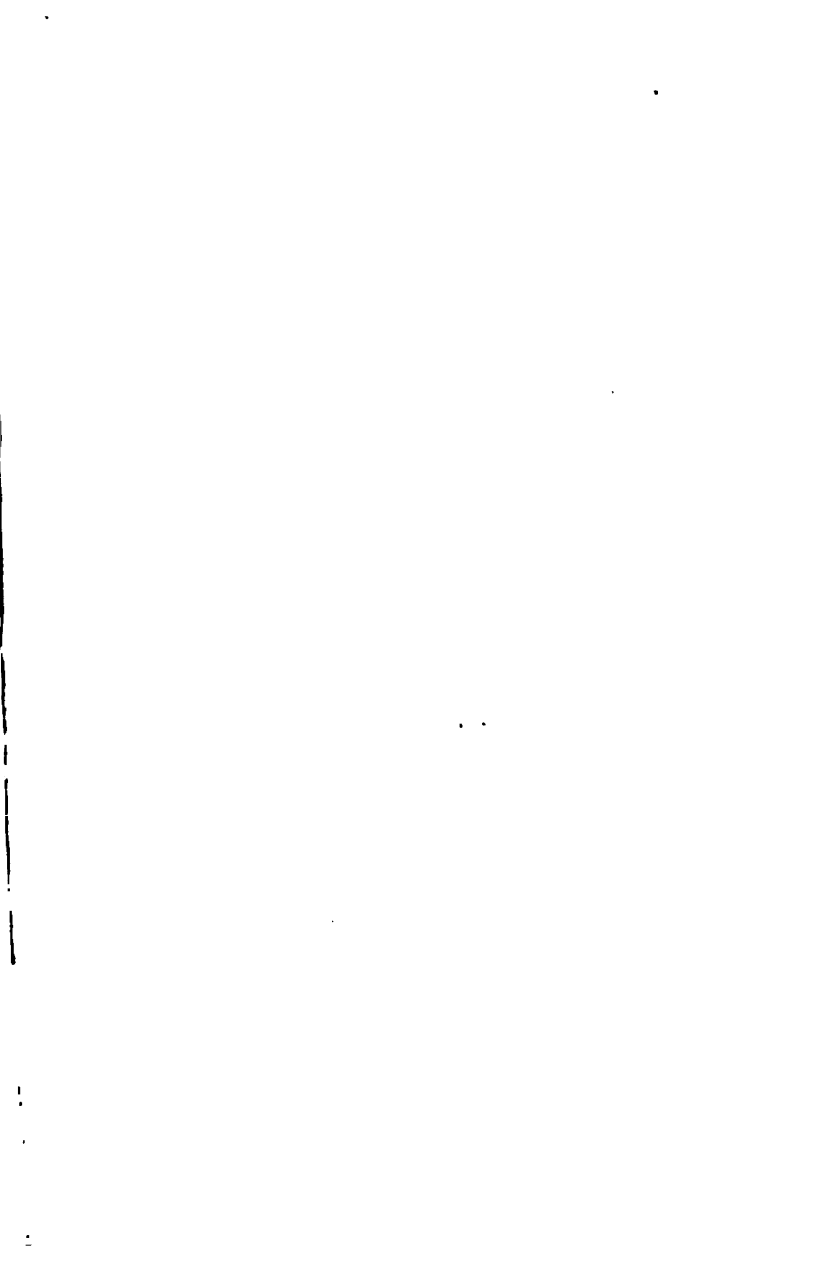
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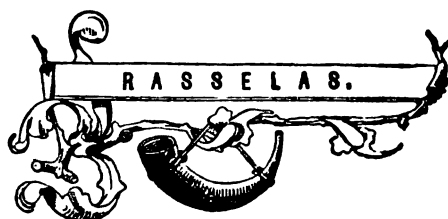
THE HISTORY
OF
RASSELAS
AND
ELIZABETH.

ILLUSTRATED.

NEW YORK:
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1876.

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THE
HISTORY OF RASSELAS,
Prince of Abyssinia.

A TALE.

BY
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

A NEW EDITION, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS



NEW YORK:
THE WORLD PUBLISHING HOUSE,
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1876.



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THE HISTORY OF RASSELAS,

Prince of Abyssinia.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope ; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow ; attend to the history of Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course ; whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of

the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place, which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could without the help of engines open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the

northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessities of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to

propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity; to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight, which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that

grew harder by time, and the building stood from century to century deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes, without need of reparation.

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage, every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had deposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom: and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages, who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments; and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful;

few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves; all but Rasselas, who in the twenty-sixth year of his age began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him; he rose abruptly in the midst of the song and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure; he neglected their officiousness, and repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting

the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humour made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporeal necessities with myself: he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry, that I may again quicken my attention. The birds pick the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happi-

ness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification ; or he has some desires, distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and, seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myself ; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity ; for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free : I fear pain when I do not feel it ; I sometimes shrink at evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated. Surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince

amused himself as he returned; uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacency in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAPTER III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

ON the next day his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference; which the prince having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man thus intrude upon me; shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become

new again must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once revered and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace, to loneliness and silence? "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased to please; I am lonely because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others." "You, sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the *happy valley*. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the emperor of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither labour to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labour or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which

of your wants is without supply ; if you want nothing how are you unhappy ?”

“ That I want nothing,” said the prince, “ or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint. If I had any known want, I should have a certain wish ; that wish would excite endeavour, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks, and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But, possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much ; give me something to desire.”

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. “ Sir,” said he, “ if you had seen the miseries of the world, you would know how to value your

present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness"

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

AT this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him,

because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but, considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various conditions; to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures; but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle that he forgot his real solitude; and, amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer, with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but, resolving to weary, by perseverance, him whom he

could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then, raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!"

Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have

mused away the four and twentieth part
What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors and the absurd institutions of my country; I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: in this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual lux-

ury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and of the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves; and was awakened to more vigorous exertion by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known or not considered how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He, for a few hours, regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

HE now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in the grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the powers of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though

they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined

to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer

CHAPTER VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

AMONG the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that run through it gave a constant motion; the instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Ras-

selas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains: having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that

you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly; to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied; I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls, but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction and the body's gravity will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall

no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey with equal serenity the marts of trade and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity to the other!"

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains, yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall: therefore I suspect, that,

from any height where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky?

Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the

water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had ever been known; the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to

discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world

without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Afric and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your

father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated: but no form of government has yet been discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on the one part, and subjection on the other and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand, but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education than such as might qualify me for commerce; and, discovering in me great strength of memory and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be sometime the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy

veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right; but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he whose real wants are supplied must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of

the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors: because, when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

“At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce: and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. ‘This, young man,’ said he, ‘is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich; if, in four years, you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall be always equal with me who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.’

“We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When I cast my eye upon the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations,

and of learning sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

“I remember that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

“As I was supposed to trade without connection with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage: it was sufficient for me that, wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

“WHEN I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and, thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round without satiety: but, in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for awhile whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities: it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life though I should miss it in nature.

“With this thought I quieted my mind, and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised,

and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval amusements when we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn at the usual expense the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which, being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves: and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they

might as effectually have shown by warning as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince; "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon

knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

“My credit was now so high that the merchants, with whom I travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

“They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe: but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

“Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation

eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

“From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions.”

CHAPTER X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION ON POETRY.

“**W**HEREVER I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to the Angelic Nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best; whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift con-

ferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent, which it received by accident at first: or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art; that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

“I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move

those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful and whatever is dreadful must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety: for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study; and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived, till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the hap-

piness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same; he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; condemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

“His labour is not yet at an end; he must know many languages and many sciences: and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony.”

CHAPTER XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthusiastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of Europe; the nations which are now in possession of all power and all knowledge: whose armies are irresistible, and whose fleet command the remotest parts of the globe. When I compared these men with the natives of our own kingdom, and those that surround us, they appeared almost another order of beings. In their countries it is

difficult to wish for any thing that may not be obtained: a thousand arts, of which we never heard, are continually labouring for their convenience and pleasure; and whatever their own climate has denied them is supplied by their commerce."

"By what means," said the prince, "are the Europeans thus powerful; or why, since they can so easily visit Asia or Africa for trade or conquest, cannot the Asiatics and Africans invade their coasts, plant colonies in their ports, and give laws to their natural princes? The same wind that carries them back would bring us thither."

"They are more powerful, sir, than we," answered Imlac, "because they are wiser; knowledge will always predominate over ignorance, as man governs the other animals. But why their knowledge is more than ours, I know not what reason can be given, but the unsearchable will of the Supreme Being."

"When," said the prince with a sigh, "shall I be able to visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such

numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine; for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions: it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result."

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose

us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning: and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our minds in an uncommon manner is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine will, perhaps, find himself mistaken; yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its

ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

“In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines for the despatch of many laborious works which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniences; they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure.”

“They are surely happy,” said the prince,

"who have all these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is every where a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"**I** AM not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the wise and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My

children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty, or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia, in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose, after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as

wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society and the secrecy of solitude.

“From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

“I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen, and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was

soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

“A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit because my father was a merchant.

“Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the *happy valley* should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favour, and

I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?"
"Tell me without reserve; art thou content with thy condition? or, dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of this valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit of the emperor invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollections of the incidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but that of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the

prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another: he that knows himself despised will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission into captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will

open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the *happy valley*. I have examined the mountains on every side, and find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison: thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult; and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests and boiling with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed with the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince; "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment,

I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAPTER XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell in silent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with such a companion; and

that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanics laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the conies, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the cony. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We wil.

begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to choose a place proper for their mind. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time

have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance; yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day; and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest: if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

RASSELAS AND IM-LAO RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

THEY had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their thoughts with the approach of liberty, when the prince coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since, then, not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of know-



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ing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them: and that, in the mean time, she should watch lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labour was at an end: they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasure of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE
MANY WONDERS.

THE prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they might hide in their clothes; and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity.

They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed: but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but, being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and ate the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the

diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal ; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frightened because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac, having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with

their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage; and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

AS they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourable: I will act as a merchant who has no other end of

travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your *choice of life*."

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some days continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance, and his generosity made him courted by many dependants. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. His companions,

not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not for a long time comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had any thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his *choice of life*.

For some time he thought choice needless,

because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat awhile silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may by examining his own mind guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions

not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air and volatility of fancy as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions inaccessible to care or sorrow ; yet believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the *choice of life*."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure; surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND
GAIETY.

RASSELAS rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted; but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and law: but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something

solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are sometime to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils not to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

AS he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter; he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature

is degraded and debased when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation, and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or acci-

dents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being; and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire, the teachers of morality; they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against

calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

HE was still eager upon the same inquiry; and having heard of a hermit that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity, which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any

peculiar art of shunning evils or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him; and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents, and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state; they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they considered themselves as condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous; and was yet in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen, without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

ON the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that

they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to open walks where the shades were darkest: the bows of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces: and a rivulet that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its stream sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other with conjecturing what, or who he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced, they heard the sound of music, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still further, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded with woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his atten-

tion, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have hitherto been protected against him by the princes of the country; but as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

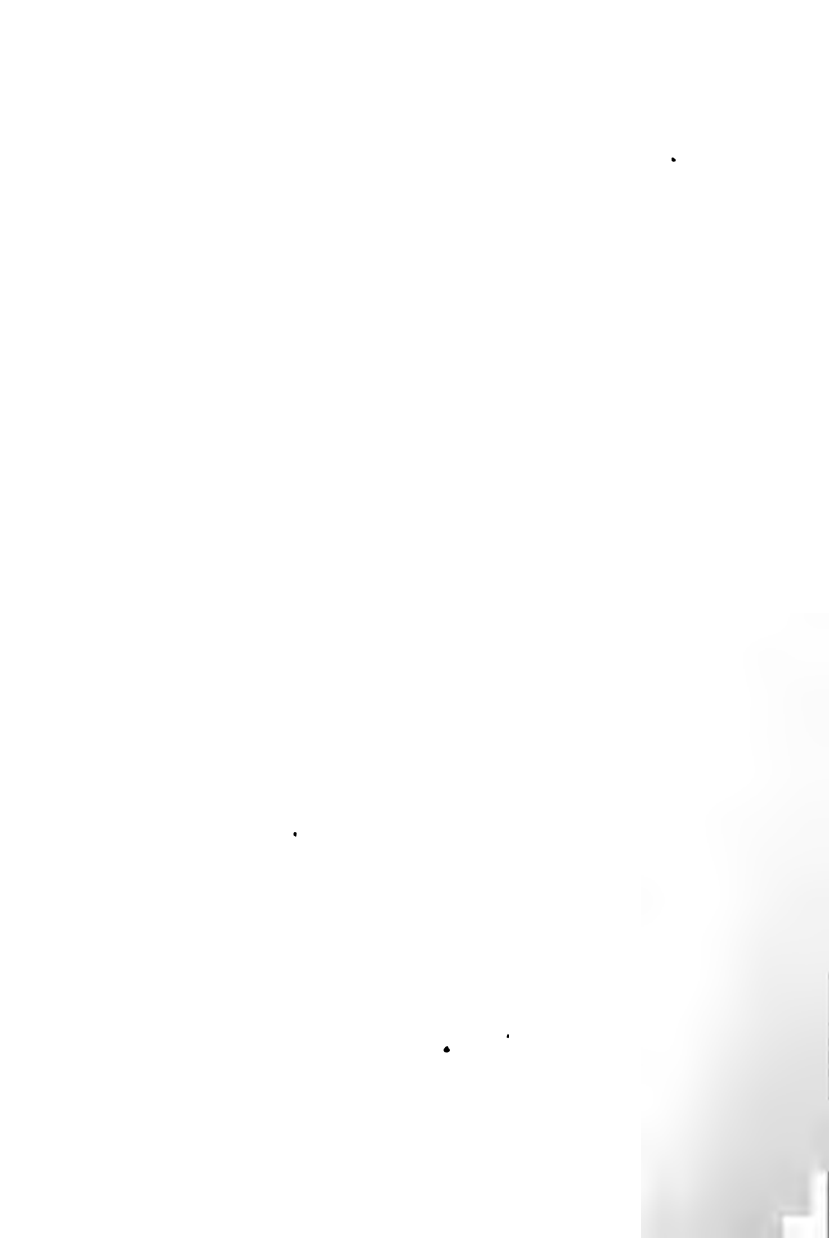
They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation that she retired to her apartment.

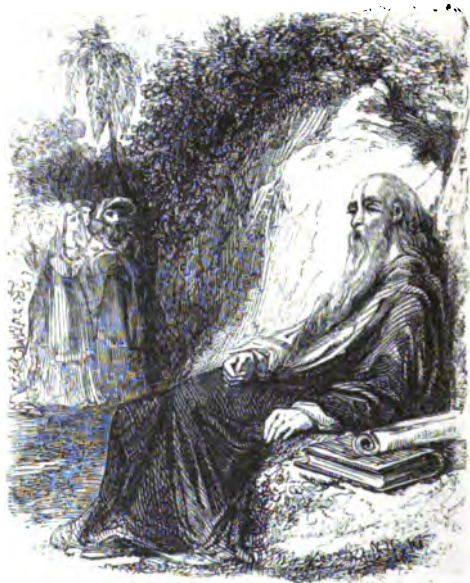
They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded





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lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other, mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you shall be willingly supplied with such conveniencies for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him; and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now

wonder that your reputation is so far extended: we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life*."

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my

final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

“For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasures of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grew in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment than led by devotion into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I

have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but after a short pause offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every

one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him a hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labour of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion from duty. Others readily allowed, that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly

impressed that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other

men may amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct: they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse; I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature?"

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have

enabled me to afford. To live according to nature is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects: to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up, and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE
WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more

experiments and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

“We have hitherto,” said she, “known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power; and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good; or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of

a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power?" said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was de-

posed. The Sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE
DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful; but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were imbibed by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which

detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient: every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear: and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before

her. "Answer," said she, "great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint!"

"You are then," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses than I have been in courts." "I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest; they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil which

though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants than pleased with my readiness to succour them. and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH, perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of

parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy; in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

“Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children: thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

“The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

“Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression:

the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour; but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on to love less and less: and if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation."

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous; the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet

less agree with one another; even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence that most deserve it: for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety by the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and

are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude; it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAPTER XXVII

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity; the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one, he will offend another: those that are not favoured will think themselves injured: and, since favours

can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet he that sees inferior desert advanced above him will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover, in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will

recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous, and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an oppor-

tunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural and almost all political evils are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."

CHAPTER XXVIII

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

"**D**EAR princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are

ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

“On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen, they must be endured. But it is evident that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward: the necessities of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

“Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the motions of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform; each labouring for his own happiness by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

“Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness.”

“I know not,” said the princess, “whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues where both are supported by consciousness of good intention, I am sometimes disposed to think, with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather per-

mitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answered the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference; but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that, judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other, as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we

differ from each other, when we see only parts of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils of life the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtilties of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution: will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of Heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or peopled without it."

"How the world is to be peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and needs not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world but for ourselves."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DEBATE OF MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

"THE good of the whole," says Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommunities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and avoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home, and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children; the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely all these evils may be avoided by that deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will

allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage, at least, will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children.'

"What reason cannot collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those whose accuracy of remark and comprehensiveness of knowledge made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other, at a time when opinions are fixed, and habits are established; when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible that two, travelling through the world, under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory

levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken: he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labours in vain: and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason never can decide; questions that elude investigation, and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of action present to their

minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestic day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age will probably escape the encroachments of their children; but, in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope; and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation; as soft bodies, by continual attrition, conform their surfaces to each other.

"I believe it will be found that those who marry late are best pleased with their children, and those who marry early with their partners."

"The union of these two affections," said Rasselas, "would produce all that could be

wished. Perhaps there is a time when marriage might unite them, a time neither too early for the father, nor too late for the husband."

"Every hour," answered the princess, "confirms my prejudice in favour of the position so often uttered by the mouth of Imlac, 'That nature sets her gifts on the right hand and on the left.' Those conditions, which flatter hope and attract desire, are so constituted, that, as we approach one, we recede from another. There are goods so opposed that we cannot seize both, but, by too much prudence, may pass between them at too great a distance to reach either. This is often the fate of long consideration; he does nothing who endeavours to do more than is allowed to humanity. Flatter not yourself with contrarieties of pleasure. Of the blessings set before you make your choice, and be content. No man can taste the fruits of autumn while he is delighting his scent with the flowers of spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile.

CHAPTER XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants; a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders, and from the wonders which time has

spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey the piles of stone or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes, whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows?"

"To know any thing," returned the poet, "we must know its effects; to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated, or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present, we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon the present: recollection and anticipation fill up

almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

“The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance, when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may be properly charged with evil who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

“There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neg-

lected; those who have kingdoms to govern have understandings to cultivate.

“Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures. In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

“When the eye or the imagination is struck with any uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or, what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects.”

“I am willing,” said the prince, “to see all that can deserve my search.” “And I,” said the princess, “shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity.”

“The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky

works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the Pyramids; fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only uncertain traditions. Of these the greatest is still standing, very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah. "I have often heard of the Pyramids, and shall not rest until I have seen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

THE resolution being taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the Pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and cultivated nature.

When they came to the great Pyramid,

they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabric intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he showed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the Pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments; and, having hired the common guides, climbed up to the first passage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke,

and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety ; there is no danger from the dead ; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth ; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence ; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which have already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason why spectres should haunt the Pyramid more than other places, or why they should have power or will to hurt innocence and purity. Our

entrance is no violation of their privileges; we can take nothing from them, how then can we offend them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will always go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember that you are the companion of the princess of Abyssinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die," returned the lady, "let her command some death less dreadful than enclosure in this horrid cavern; you know I dare not disobey you: I must go if you command me; but, if I once enter, I never shall come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expostulation or reproof; and, embracing her, told her that she should stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was yet not satisfied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful a purpose as that of entering the recesses of the Pyramid. "Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I must not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I came hither only to do."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH descended to the tents, and the rest entered the Pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been repositied. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness rendered the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the Pyramids no reason has ever

been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been repositied at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

“I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king, whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a Pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art that, not content with a moderate condition, imag-

inest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreaamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the Pyramids, and confess thy folly."

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

THEY rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected; the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the Pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us: we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape.

They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away; the Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valour? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness, which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her, by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not

much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While

she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid; and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blamable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we com-

mit the event to Him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connection of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault: but, if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably imbittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him!

“Consider, princess, what would have been your condition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and, being compelled to stay in the tents, had been car-

ried away; or how would you have borne the thought if you had forced her into the Pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror?"

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This, at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH, being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was from that time delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up

with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great desire to collect notions which she had not convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them; and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked

every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till, not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsucessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence: I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who, that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?"

"The time is at hand when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a

mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow, that what satisfaction this world can afford must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated: they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement."

"How far solitude may admit goodness,

or advance it, I shall not," replied Imlac, "dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world when the image of your companion has left your thoughts."—"That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah will always be more missed as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled: yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured nature will find the

means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye: and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees; you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would then be in no danger of a cloister.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF
SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom she yet resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last wholly released

herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was not yet diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured. I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

IN seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hand of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives.

He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price,

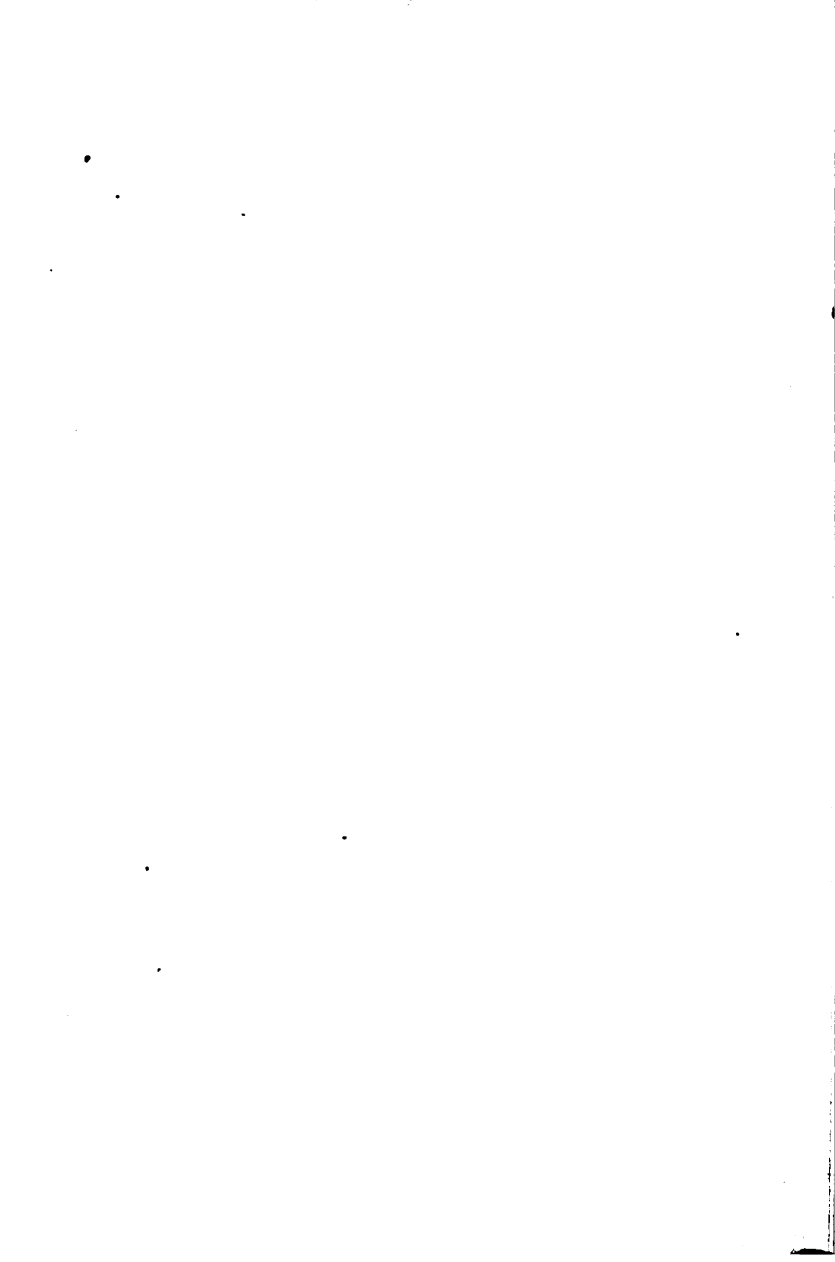
he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo, beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

“AT what time and in what manner I was forced away,” said Pekuah, “your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed





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by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

“When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger they slackened their course, and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring, shaded with trees, in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with

decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

“When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moonlight to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

“We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I ate it rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself therefore to be undressed, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my

upper vest was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and, taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

“In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. ‘Illustrious lady,’ said he, ‘my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princess in my camp.’—‘Sir,’ answered I, ‘your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever.’—‘Whoever, or whencesoever you are,’ returned the Arab, ‘your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily

procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction; the lance, that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness.'

" 'How little,' said I, 'did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!'

" 'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality.'

" You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and, finding that his pre-

dominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be expected from a maid of common rank would be paid ; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then, smiling, bowed and retired.

“Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journies. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold ; which I not only promised him, but told him that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

“I never knew the power of gold before. from that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel,

my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

“The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked, in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented and difficult of access; for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

"WE wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely for riches. Avarice is a uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different

constitutions of mind ; that which soothes the pride of one will offend the pride of another ; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way ; bring money, and nothing is denied.

“ At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. ‘ Lady,’ said the Arab, ‘ you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war : I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security : here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.’ He then led me into the inner apartments, and, seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity ; but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

“ Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty

of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile; but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

“ At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in

the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening; I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess, "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear for a few months that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual facul-

ties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room, as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation; for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing: for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore

a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without interrupting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffected and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority; when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tedi-

ousness of life ; as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude : he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they received, as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense ; for, notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house he made many incursions into the neigh-

bouring countries, and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sincerity: and, when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

“I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

“He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined,

had not your agent found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah, having heard her favourite's relation, rose and embraced her; and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAPTER XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice,"

answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month to bear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas and fluent conversation are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels; and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was

desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

“His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favourite studies are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance: ‘For, though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,’ says he, ‘bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.’”

“Surely,” said the princess, “this man is happy.”

“I visited him,” said Imlac, “with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation; he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess,

of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

“Amidst this willingness to be pleased and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me, with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, he would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me.”

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

“**A**T last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words:— ‘Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice, in the hour of imbecility and pain, to devolve it upon thee.’

“I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested, that whatever would conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

“ Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather and the distribution of the seasons; the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervours of the crab. The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempest, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator? ”

CHAPTER XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND
JUSTIFIED.

“**I** SUPPOSE he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:

“‘Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem the distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.’

“‘How long, sir,’ said I, ‘has this great office been in your hands?’

“‘About ten years ago,’ said he, ‘my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened upon my mind,

and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

“‘One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall; and, by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.’

“‘Might not some other cause,’ said I, ‘produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day.’

“‘Do not believe,’ said he with impatience, ‘that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.

“‘Why, sir,’ said I, ‘do you call that incredible which you know or think you know, to be true?’

“‘Because,’ said he, ‘I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I therefore shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself.’”

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

“**H**EAR, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat?—Hear me therefore with attention.

“I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride

by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.'

"I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand. 'My heart,' said he, 'will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun.'"

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practise his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected, and the favourite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted?

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

“DISORDERS of intellect,” answered Imlac, “happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor

considered as any depravation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

“To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

“In time some particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in

weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine myself the queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and granted the petitions of the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shep-

herdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have, in my chamber, heard the winds whistle and the sheep bleat: sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe, on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavoured to image the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour of my solitude; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," says Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes. When we first form them we know them to be absurd, but fa-

miliarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far passed, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason: let us close the disquisitions of the night by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The

old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the

vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave?"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage, with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squan-

dered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity: endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay: and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He rose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking, that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account; for age had never been considered as the season of felicity; and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigour and alacrity might be happy: that the noon of life could be bright if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly

entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they could confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented; "For nothing," said she, "is more common than to call our own condition the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE princess and Pekuah, having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared that by this artifice no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This,"

said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own; and, perhaps, the distrust, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Im-lac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could

not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company; men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress."—"That," said Pekuah, "must be my care; I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it; and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowledge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity: and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so

splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy? he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them; and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now

watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration: but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and, lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience; in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life; I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity: but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of

ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations, which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man

habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favour myself in a known error, or am determined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt: fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain; but when melancholic notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

“But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which, when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light which, from time to time, breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions.”

CHAPTER XLVII

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPIC.

“ALL this,” said the astronomer, “I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrollable and overwhelming idea that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see

how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret, but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries

yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessities; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed: one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayan, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who con

verses openly with mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something

so congenial to the mind of man that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous by endearing us to a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use but that it disengages us from allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, "whether

he could not delay her retreat by showing her something which she had not seen before?"

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found; but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the Catacombs, or the ancient repositories in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the Catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else is offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the Catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind; let me find you safe when I return."—"No; I will not be left," answered Pekuah,

‘I will go down between you and the prince.’

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

IMLAO DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

“**W**HAT reason,” said the prince, “can be given why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcasses which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight as soon as decent rites can be performed?”

“The original ancient custom,” said Imlac, “is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness

to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say that it may be material, who nevertheless believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can

scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac,

“against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty.”

“Yet let us not,” said the astronomer, “too arrogantly limit the Creator’s power.”

“It is no limitation of omnipotence,” replied the poet, “to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation.”

“I know not,” said Nekayah, “any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?”

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay : whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscernible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority." The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die, that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on for ever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and under the protection of their guard returned to Cairo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

IT was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the Catacombs the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order; she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up, for the next age, models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

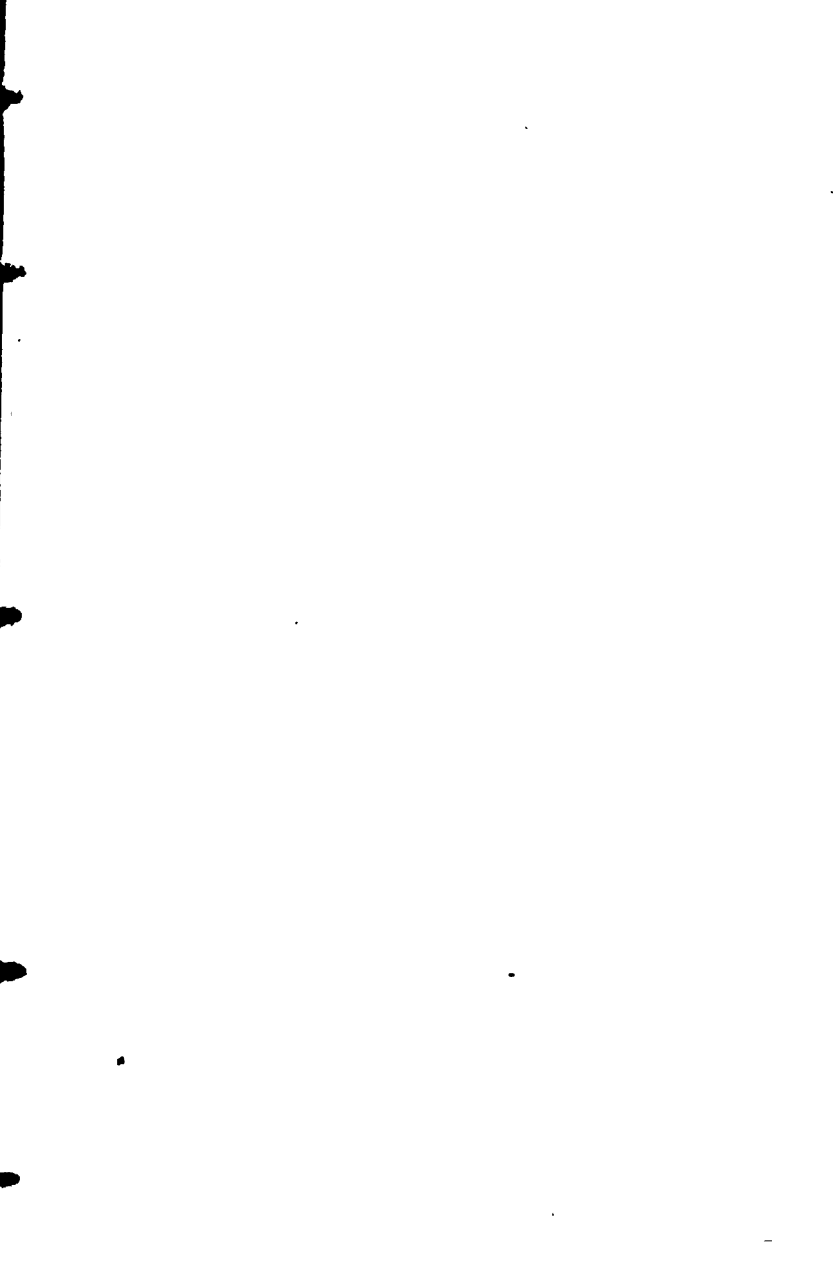
The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

THE END.







ELIZABETH. Page 21.

ELIZABETH;

OR,

The Exiles of Siberia.

A TALE,

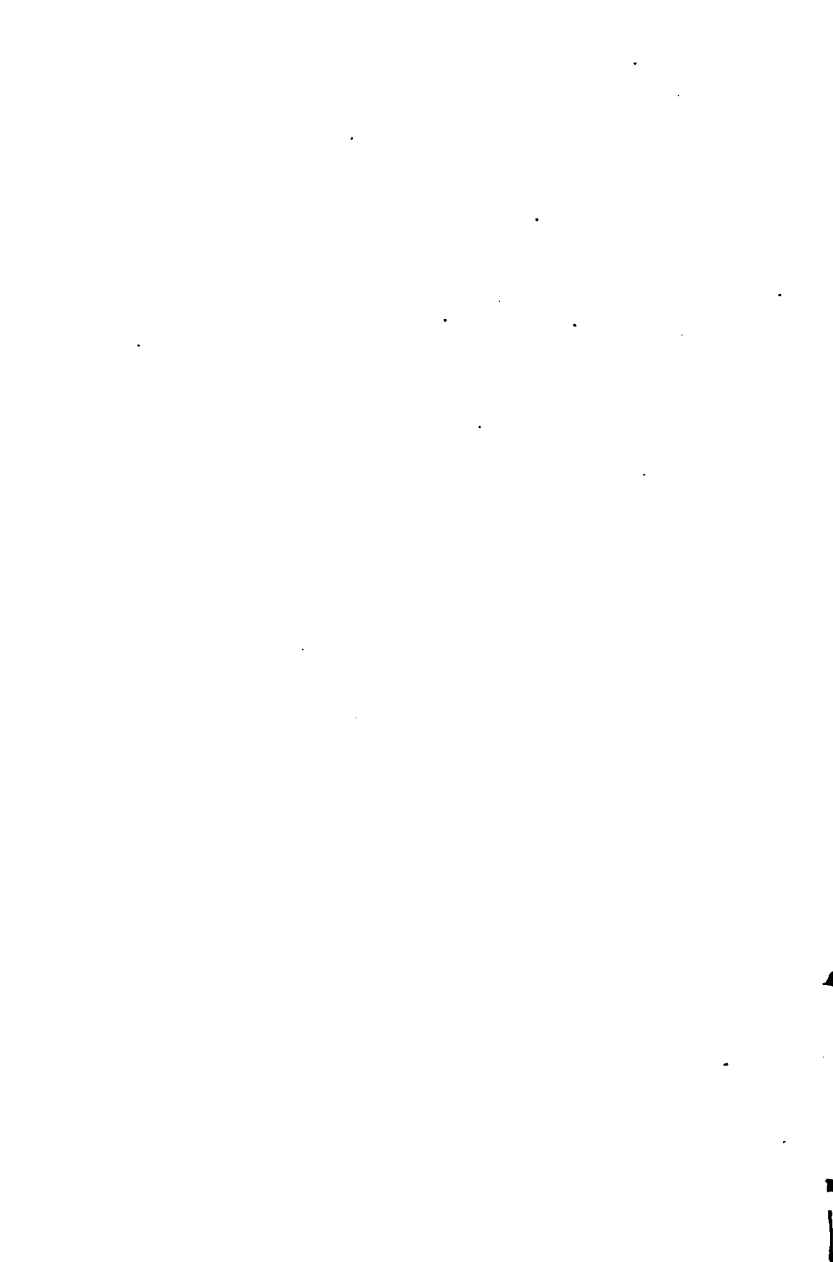
FOUNDED UPON FACTS.

FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME UGTTIN.

The Original Translation Revised and Corrected



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P R E F A C E.

THE incident which gave rise to this history is founded in truth. No imagination, however fertile, could produce actions so heroic, or sentiments so noble and elevated.—The heart alone could inspire them.

The daughter who conceived the glorious design of delivering her parents from exile, and who carried this design into execution, in spite of the various and almost insurmountable obstacles which opposed her, is not the child of fiction, but of nature. She really existed, nay, does still exist; and should my tale possess any of the powers of attraction, it will from this source be principally derived.

Authors have been frequently accused of representing the beauties of virtue with too bold a pencil, and in colours too vivid. Far am I, however, from presuming to insinuate, that this criticism is applicable to myself, who possess not the abilities requisite to attain this brilliant though creative talent; nor do I conceive that it is in the power of the most eloquent author, by all the studied embellishments and decorations of language, to add a single

charm to the innate beauties of virtue; on the contrary, she is in herself so far superior to the adscitious aids of ornament, that it would rather appear impossible to describe her in all her native dignity and loveliness. This is the chief difficulty I have experienced in writing Elizabeth.

The real heroine is far superior to mine, and has gone through more perils.—By bestowing a guide upon Elizabeth, and in terminating her journey at Moscow, I have considerably diminished her fatigue and danger, and consequently her merit. But there are many who are not sufficiently sensible how paramount is the duty to parents, and, therefore, know not to what extent this duty will instigate a child, at once affectionate and enterprising, when achieving the service and preservation of a beloved parent:—to such,—had I related the whole truth, my tale might have borne the appearance of exaggeration or improbability; and to them a recital of long fatigues, though unable to exhaust the courage and perseverance of a heroine of eighteen, might yet appear tedious and uninteresting.

The scene of the principal anecdote of this story is removed as far as Siberia; yet, I must add, that it was unnecessary for me to extend my researches to so distant a region; since every country affords traits of filial piety, and of mothers animated with the glow of parental tenderness.

ELIZABETH.

I.

ON the banks of the Irtish, which rises in Calmuck Tartary, and falls into the Oby, is situated Tobolsk,* the capital of Siberia;†

* Tobolsk, or Tobolski, is the residence of a governor, and of the Greek archbishop of Siberia. It is situated at the confluence of the Irtish and the Tobol, and is built partly upon a little hill on the east of the Irtish, so that it is divided into upper and lower. The governor's palace is in the citadel, some part of which was still in ruins when Kotzebue arrived there, as an exile, in 1800.

Tobolsk contains several churches; its inhabitants are computed at 15,000 souls. The bazar, or market-place, swarms with Kalmuck merchants, who bring goods from India; but the principal trade of Tobolsk consists in furs. In this city provisions are very cheap.

† Siberia is the most northern country of the Russian empire in Asia. It is bounded on the East by the sea of Japan, on the South by Chinese Tartary, on the West by European Russia, and on the North by the Frozen Ocean. As this immense country, more than 2,000 English miles in length, scarcely contains more than 3,500,000 inhabitants, the emperors of Russia send thither all the criminals of the empire, condemned to exile by the sentence of a court or

bounded on the north by forests eleven hundred versts* in length, extending to the borders of the frozen ocean, and interspersed with rocky mountains covered with perpetual snows. Around it are sterile plains, whose frozen sands have seldom received an impression from the human foot, and numerous frigid lakes, or rather stagnant marshes, whose icy streams never watered a meadow, nor opened to the sunbeam the beauties of a flower. On approaching nearer to the pole, these stately productions of nature, whose sheltering foliage is so grateful to the weary traveller, totally disappear. Brambles, dwarf birches, and shrubs alone ornament this desolate spot; and, farther on, even these vanish, leaving nothing but swamps covered with a useless moss, and presenting, as it were, the last efforts of expiring nature. But still amidst the horror and gloom of an

justice, and all persons suspected of crimes against the state, often without their having been summoned to a single interrogatory, or knowing the cause of their banishment. The people who inhabited Siberia, when it was conquered in 1777 by Yermak, a Cossack chief, were the Tartars, the Vogouls, and the Ostiacks.

* The verst is a measure which serves to mark distance in Russia, like the mile in England, and the league in France. Three versts are nearly equal to two English miles.

eternal winter, nature displays some of her grandest spectacles:—the aurora borealis,* enclosing the horizon like a resplendent arch, emits columns of quivering light, and frequently offers to view sights which are unknown in a more southern hemisphere. South of Tobolsk is the province called Ischim:† plains strewed with the repositories of the dead, and divided by lakes of stagnant and unwholesome water, separate it from

* The Aurora Borealis is a brilliant phenomenon of nature, which exists, almost exclusively, to the northern regions of the terrestrial globe, though some travellers have asserted, that the South Pole has likewise its Aurora Australis. It is a sort of circular cloud, extended over the horizon, from which issue spouts, sheafs, and columns of fire of different hues, yellow, blood colour, red, blue, violet, &c.

The matter of which the Aurora Borealis is composed appears to have its seat, in the atmosphere, at a considerable height, the same Aurora having been seen at Petersburg, Naples, Rome, Lisbon, and even at Cadiz. M. de Mairan, in his treatise on the Aurora Borealis, maintains that these phenomena are generally at an elevation of from three to nine miles.

The progress of electricity, in the century which has just passed, promises a sure way to the physical causes of the Aurora Borealis, whose rockets, spouts, and sheets of light seem to be so many electrical currents, which float in the highly rarified air of the elevated regions of the atmosphere

† The province of Ischim, so called from the river of the same name, is an immense plain of Siberia to the south of Tobolsk between the Irtysh and the Ischim.

the Kirguis,* an idolatrous and wandering people. It is bounded on the left by the river Irtish, and on the right by the Tobol,† the naked and barren shores of which present to the eye fragments of rocks promiscuously heaped together, with here and there a solitary fir-tree rearing its head. Beneath them, in a space formed by an angle of the river, is the small village of Saimka, about six hundred versts from Tobolsk: situated in the farthest extremity of the circle, in the midst of a desert, its environs are as gloomy as the sombre light which illuminates the hemisphere, and as dreary as the climate.

The province of Ischim is nevertheless denominated the Italy of Siberia; since it enjoys nearly four months of summer, though the winter is rigorous to an excess. The north winds which blow during that period are so incessant, and render the cold so

* The Kirguis or Kirghese are a Tartar colony to the north of Independent Tartary, divided into three hordes, the greater, the middle, and the lesser. The desert of Ischim separates them from Siberia.

† The Tobol derives its source from the country of the Kirguis, among the mountains which separate it from the government of Ufa. It falls into the Irtish near Tobolsk, after having supplied a course of about 500 versts. Its banks are so little elevated, that it generally overflows them in the spring, and inundates a vast extent of country

piercing, that even in September the Tobol is paved with ice. A heavy snow falls upon the earth, and disappears not before the end of May; but from the time that it begins to dissolve, the celerity with which the trees shoot forth their leaves, and the fields display their verdure, is almost incredible: three days is the short period that nature requires to bring her plants to maturity. The blossoms of the birch tree exhale an odoriferous scent, and the wild flowers of the field decorate the ground; flocks of various kinds of fowl play upon the surface of the lakes: the white crane plunges among the rushes of the solitary marsh to build her nest, which she plaits with reeds; whilst the flying squirrels, in the woods cutting the air with their bushy tails, hop from tree to tree, and nibble the buds of the pines, and the tender leaves of the birch. Thus the natives of these dreary regions experience a scene of pleasure; but the unhappy exiles who inhabit it—alas! experience none.

Of these miserable beings the greatest part reside in the villages situated on the borders of the river, between Tobolsk and the extremest boundary of Ischim; others are dispersed in cottages about the country. The

government provides for some: but many are abandoned to the scanty subsistence they can procure from the chase during the winter season, and all are objects of general commiseration. Indeed the name they give to the exiles seems to have been dictated by the tenderest sympathy, as well as by a strong conviction of their innocence; they call them "Unfortunates."

A few versts from Saimka, in the centre of a marshy forest, upon the border of a deep circular lake, surrounded with black poplars, resided one of these banished families, consisting of three persons—a man about five and forty, his wife, and a beautiful daughter in the bloom of youth.

Secluded in the desert, this little family were strangers to the intercourse with society: the father went alone to the chase; but neither had he, his wife, or his daughter ever been at Saimka; and, except one poor Tartarian peasant,* who waited on them, no

* The Tartars are a numerous people, who inhabit the greater part of the north of Asia, and the north of Europe. Siberia was originally inhabited by Tartars: it also borders upon Chinese and Independent Tartary. The Tartars are almost all Mahometans. They subsist on their cattle, and on plunder which they obtain from their neighbours. They are particularly fond of horse-flesh. For the most part they

human being had entered their dwelling. The Governor of Tobolsk only was informed of their birth, their country, and the cause of their banishment: and this secret he had not even confided to the lieutenant of his jurisdiction, who was established at Saimka. In committing these exiles to his care, the governor had merely given orders that they should be provided with a comfortable lodging, a garden, food, and raiment; and he had given to the lieutenant a positive charge to restrict them from all communication with any one, and particularly to intercept any letter they might attempt to convey to the court of Russia.

So much consideration, so much mystery, and such strict precaution, excited a suspicion that under the simple name of Peter Springer, the father of this family concealed a name more illustrious, and misfortunes of no common nature. Perhaps he had been guilty of some great crime; or possibly he was a victim to the hatred and injustice of the Russian Ministers.

But every endeavour to discover the truth

are a wandering race, encamping here and there without any fixed habitation. They are divided into many tribes, as the Kalmucks, Kirguis, Usbecs, Nogayans, Moguls, &c.

of these conjectures having proved ineffectual, curiosity was soon extinguished, and all interest in the fate of the new exiles died with it. Indeed, they were so seldom seen that they were soon forgotten; and if, in pursuit of the chase, some straggling sportsman rambled towards the lake of the forest, and inquired the name of the inhabitants of the hut upon its borders, the only answer to be obtained was, that "they were Unfortunate Exiles;" and, on quitting the spot, a secret prayer that the Almighty would restore them to their country was the tribute of compassion generally bestowed.

Peter Springer had built their little cottage himself; it was of the wood of fir trees, thatched with straw; detached masses of rocks defended it from the sweeping blasts of the north wind, and from the inundations of the lake. These rocks, formed of a soft peeling granite, in their exfoliation reflected the rays of the sun; mushrooms sprung from their crevices, some of a pale pink, others of a saffron colour or of a grayish blue, like those which grow near the lake Baikal,* announced the earliest days of

* The Lake Baikal is in the government of Irkutsk, and extends from the fifty-first to the fifty-fifth degree of north

spring; and, in those cavities, where hurricanes had scattered loose earth, pines and service-trees buried their roots, and raised their tender foliage.

On the southern side of the lake the forest consisted only of underwood, thinly scattered and leaving open to view the uncultivated plains beyond, covered with burying-places and monuments of the dead. Many of the tombs had been pillaged, and upon the earth had been strewed the bones, the only remains of a nation that would have been consigned to eternal oblivion, had not the gold and jewels buried with its people revealed to avarice its existence.

To the east of this extensive plain a little wooden chapel had been erected by the primitive Christians. On that side the tombs have been respected; and, under the cross which adorned it, no one had dared to profane the ashes of the dead. In these plains

latitude. The Russians call it the Baikal Sea, and the Holy Sea; and, next to the Caspian Sea, it is the largest expanse of water in Russia. It is from five to six hundred versts in length, and from fifty to seventy in breadth. This lake is nearly surrounded by high mountains. It is generally covered with ice before the end of December, which does not melt till the month of May. There are several islands in it.

or steppes* (the name they bear in Siberia) Peter Springer, during the long and severe winter of the northern climate, spent his days in hunting. Sometimes he killed elks which feed on the leaves of the willow and poplar; sometimes he caught sables, but more frequently ermines, which are there very numerous. With the price that he obtained for their fur, he procured from Tobolsk different articles, which contributed to the comfort of his wife, and the education of his daughter. The long winter evenings were devoted to the instruction of the young Elizabeth. Seated between her parents, she would read aloud some passage of history, while Springer directed her attention to those parts which could elevate and expand her mind, and Phedora, her mother, to all that could make it tender and compassionate. One of them pointed out to her the beauties of heroism and glory, the other all the charms of piety and benevolence. Her father reminded her of the dignity and sub-

* The steppes are high uncultivated plains, and, for the most part, destitute of inhabitants. In those which are covered with brushwood, and watered by rivulets, the wandering hordes travel with their flocks. There are even some villages found in them. They are generally of immense extent.

limity of virtue, her mother of the support and consolation it affords: the first taught how highly to revere, the latter how carefully to cherish it. From these united instructions Elizabeth acquired a disposition at once heroic and gentle; uniting the courage and energy of the father to the angelic mildness of the mother. At once ardent and enterprising, as the exalted ideas of honour could render her, docile and submissive as the blindest votary of love.

But as soon as the snow began to yield to the power of the sun, and a slight shade of verdure appeared upon the earth, the whole family was busily engaged in the culture of their garden. Springer turned up the earth, while Elizabeth sowed the seeds prepared by the industrious hand of Phedora. Their little enclosure was surrounded by plantations of alder, of white cornel,* and a species of birch much esteemed in Siberia, its blossom being the only one that affords a fragrant smell. On the southern side of his plantation, Springer had built a sort of hothouse, in which he cultivated, with the greatest assiduity and care, various flowers unknown

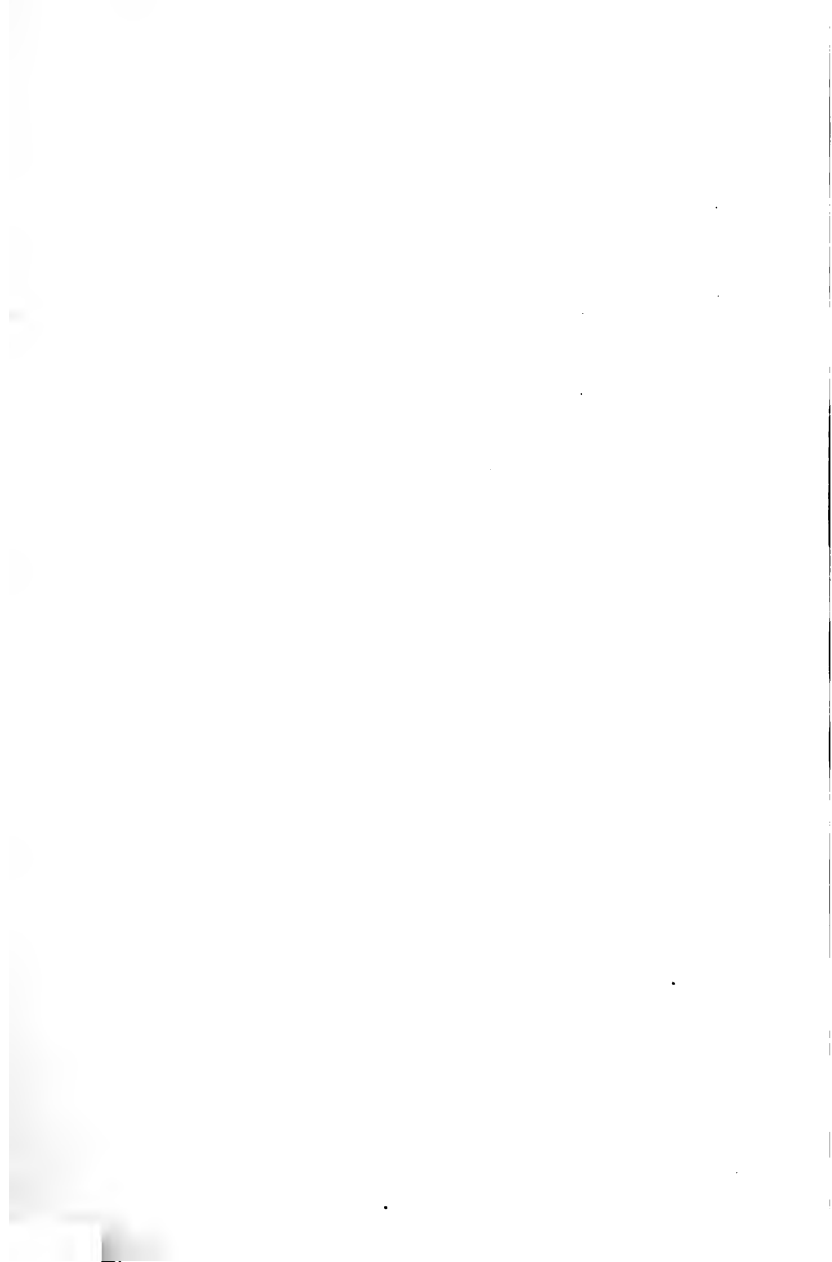
* The Cornel Tree, Cornelberry, *Cornus Alba* of Linnæus, has broad oval leaves and white berries.

in that climate; when they were in full bloom, he would gather them, and, pressing them to his lips, ornament the brow of his daughter, saying, "Elizabeth, adorn yourself with the flowers of your native country, their fate resembles yours; like you they flourish in a foreign land. Oh! may your end be more fortunate than theirs!"

Except during these moments of emotion, he was calm and silent on the subject of his misfortunes. For successive hours he would remain absorbed in the deepest thought, his eyes fixed upon the same object, and seated in the same spot. The caresses of his wife, and more especially those of his daughter, at these times, seemed rather to increase than to alleviate his misery. He would sometimes take her in his arms, and, pressing her to his bosom, would exclaim, presenting her to her mother, "Take her, Phedora! take our child! her fate and yours rend my heart! Ah! why did you follow me? Had you abandoned me to my own sufferings, had you not insisted upon partaking of them, perhaps, even in this desert, I could have been content, knowing that you and my child were living happy and respected in our native land!" The gentle Phedora sel



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dom answered him but with tears; her looks, her words, her actions, all bore testimony to the tender and sincere affection by which she was attached to her husband. Separated from him, she could have known no happiness; nor did she so forcibly regret their exile from their country, or their fall from grandeur, when she reflected, that high dignities, places of trust and danger, might have detained him at a distance from her. In exile he never quitted her; and therefore she could have almost rejoiced in Siberia, but for the grief she endured at seeing the affliction with which his soul was rent.

Although Phedora had passed the first season of youth, she was still beautiful. Devoted to her Creator, her husband, and her child, time had not hitherto effaced the charms that innocence and virtue had imprinted on her countenance. She seemed to have been created for love in its greatest purity; and if such were her destiny, it had been fulfilled. Attentive to all the wishes of her husband, she watched his looks to discover what could contribute to his comfort or pleasure, that she might anticipate his wish before he had expressed it. She prepared their repasts herself. Order, neatness and comfort was

the characteristic of their little abode. The largest apartment served as a sleeping-room for herself and Springer. It was warmed by a stove; the walls were decorated with the drawings and work of Phedora and her daughter, and the windows were glazed—a luxury seldom enjoyed in this country, and for which they were indebted to the profit which Springer derived from the chase. Two small rooms completed their habitation; one was occupied by Elizabeth; in the other, where the garden and kitchen utensils were kept, slept the Tartarian peasant, their only attendant.

Their days were spent in superintending their domestic concerns; in making different articles of clothing out of the skins of the reindeer, which they dyed with a preparation from the bark of the birch, or lined with thick furs. But when Sunday arrived, Phedora secretly lamented that she was deprived from attending divine service, and spent great part of the day in prayer. Prostrate before the God of all consolation, she invoked him in behalf of the objects of her tenderness; and if her piety daily increased, one of the principal causes was, that her ideas and her expressions became more elo-

quent, and better adapted to bestow that consolation which her husband so much required, in proportion as her soul became elevated by devotion.

II.

THE young Elizabeth, who knew no other country than the desolate one which she had inhabited from the age of four years, discovered beauties which nature bestows even upon these inhospitable climes; and, innocence finding pleasure everywhere, she amused herself with climbing the rocks which bordered the lake, in search of the eggs of hawks and white vultures, that build their nests there during summer. Sometimes she caught wood pigeons to fill a little aviary, and at others angled for carassins,* which move in shoals, whose purple shells, lying against

* Carassin is the specific name of a fish of the Carp kind. *Cyprinus Carassius*. Linn. Its body is large, thick, and covered with scales of a middling size. It is brown on the back, greenish on the side, and yellowish with some spots of red under the belly. It delights in lakes of which the bottom is marly.

one another, appear through the water like a sheet of fire covered with liquid silver. It never occurred to the happy days of her childhood that there could be a lot more fortunate than her own. Her health was established by the keen air she breathed; and exercise, in her light figure, united agility and strength; while her countenance, beaming with innocence and peace, each day seemed to disclose some new charm. Thus, far removed from the busy world and mankind, did this lovely girl improve in beauty, for the eyes only of her parents, to charm no heart but theirs; like the flower of the desert, which blooms before the sun, and arrays itself in not less brilliant colours, because it is destined to shine only in the presence of that luminary to which it is indebted for its existence.

The most fervent affections are those which are least divided. Thus Elizabeth, who knew no one except her parents, (consequently could love none but them,) loved them with a fervour that scarcely admitted of comparison. They were the protectors of her childhood, the partakers of her amusements, her only society. She knew nothing but what they had taught her: to them was

she indebted for her talents, her knowledge, her studies, her recreations, and every thing; and feeling that, without them she could do nothing, enjoy nothing, she delighted in a dependence that was felt only through the medium of the benefits which resulted from it. When reason and reflection, however, succeeded to the carelessness of childhood, Elizabeth observed the tears of her mother, and perceived that her father was unhappy. She often entreated of them to tell her the cause, but could obtain no other answer than that they regretted being such a distance from their country. But with the name of that country, or the rank they held in it, they did not entrust her, fearing to excite a vain regret by informing her of the elevated rank from which they had been precipitated. From the time that Elizabeth discovered the affliction of her parents, her thoughts no longer flowed in the same channel as before, and the whole tenor of her life became changed. The innocent amusements she had so much enjoyed lost all their attractions. Her birds were neglected, and her flowers were forgotten: when she went down to the lake, it was no longer to cast the bait, or to navigate her little canoe, but

to meditate profoundly upon a scheme which had become the sole occupation of her mind. Sometimes seated upon a projecting rock, her eyes fixed upon the waters of the lake, she reflected upon the griefs of her parents, and on the means of alleviating them. They wept for their country. Elizabeth knew not where this country was situated; but that they were unhappy out of it was sufficient. All her thoughts were directed to devise some plan for restoring them to it. She would then raise her eyes to heaven to implore that assistance which she could expect from thence only; and would remain buried in a reverie so profound that the snow, falling in large flakes, and driven with violence against her by the wind, could not disturb it. But, if her parents called, in an instant she would descend from the tops of the rocks, to receive the lessons of her father, or to assist her mother in her domestic avocations. But with them, or alone; whether engaged in reading, or occupied with her needle, one sole idea pursued her; one project held constant possession of her mind; this project she kept profoundly secret, resolved not to mention it till the moment of her departure should arrive.

Yes: she resolved to tear herself from the embraces of her parents,—to proceed alone, on foot, to Petersburg, and to implore of the Emperor pardon for her father. Such was the bold design which had presented itself to her imagination; such was the daring enterprise, the dangers of which could not daunt the heroic courage of a young and timid female. She beheld, in their strongest light, many of the impediments she must surmount, but her confidence in the Creator and the ardour of her wishes encouraged her; and she felt convinced that she could overcome them all. As her scheme, however, began to unfold itself, and she reflected upon the means of carrying it into execution, her ignorance could not fail to alarm her. She had never passed the boundaries of the forest she inhabited; how then was she to find her way to Petersburg? how could she travel through countries inhabited by people who spoke a language unknown to her. She must subsist upon charity: to submit to this she recalled to her aid those precepts of humility which her mother had so carefully inculcated; but her father had so often spoken of the inflexibility of mankind that

she dreaded being reduced to implore their compassion. Elizabeth was too well acquainted with the tenderness of her parents, to indulge the hope that they would facilitate her journey. It was not to them that she could, in this instance, have recourse. To whom then could she apply, in the desert where she lived? to whom address herself in a dwelling, the entrance to which was forbidden to every human being? Still she did not despair; the remembrance of an accident to which her father had nearly fallen a victim, had engraven upon her mind the conviction that there is no place so desolate, in which Providence cannot hear the prayers of the unfortunate, and afford to them assistance.

Some years before, Springer had been delivered, by the intrepidity of a young stranger, from imminent peril, upon one of the high rocks which form a boundary to the Tobol. This brave youth was the son of M. de Smoloff, the governor of Tobolsk. He came every winter to the plains of Ischim to kill elks and sables, and sometimes to hunt the bears of the Uralian mountains,* which

* The Uralian Mountains serve as a boundary between Europe and the north of Asia. From north to south they

are occasionally seen in the environs of Samka. In this dangerous chase he had met Springer, and was the means of saving his life. From that period the name of Smoloff had never been mentioned in the abode of the exiles but with reverence and gratitude. Elizabeth and her mother felt the most lively regret at not knowing their benefactor, that they might offer to him their acknowledgments and benedictions; but to Heaven they daily offered them for him, and indulged the hope, at each return of the hunting season, that chance might lead him to their hut. They, however, expected in vain. Its entrance had been forbidden to him, as well as to every one else; and he lamented not the restriction, as he was yet ignorant of the treasure which this humble habitation enclosed.

Nevertheless, since Elizabeth had been thoroughly convinced of the difficulty of leaving the desert without some human aid,

extend in a straight line, more than 1500 English miles. They may be divided into three principal branches, one of which reaches to the Frozen Ocean. The highest point of the Uralian Mountains is the Bashkirey, in the government of Orenburg. They abound in useful minerals, are covered with thick forests, and give rise to ten or twelve considerable rivers.

her thoughts had frequently rested upon young Smoloff. Such a protector would have dissipated all her terrors, and might have vanquished all the obstacles that opposed her design. Who could be better calculated than he to give all the information she required, respecting her journey from Siamka to Petersburg? to instruct her in what method to get her petition delivered to the Emperor? and, should her flight irritate the governor, who could be better calculated than a son to soften his resentment, move his compassion, and save her parents from being made responsible for her transgression?

Thus did she reflect on all the advantages which were likely to result from such a support; and as winter drew near, she resolved not to let the hunting season pass away, without taking some steps to inform herself whether young Smoloff was in the country; and, if so, of seeking an opportunity to speak to him.

Springer had been so much affected by the terror of his wife and daughter, at the mere recital of the danger he had incurred, that he promised never again to engage in the bear hunt; nor to extend his walks beyond

the plain, except in pursuit of squirrels or ermines. Notwithstanding this promise, Phedora could not see him depart to a distance without terror: and she always continued till his return in a state of agitation and anxiety, as if his absence was the presage of some calamity.

A heavy fall of snow, congealed into a solid mass by an intense frost, had completely covered the surface of the earth, when, on a fine morning in the month of December, Springer took his gun, and prepared for the chase. Before his departure he embraced his wife and daughter, and promised to return before the close of day; but the hour had passed, night approached, and Springer arrived not. Since the adventure which threatened his life, this was the first time he had failed in the strictest punctuality, and the terror of Phedora was indescribable. Elizabeth, while she partook of it, sought every means to tranquillize her; she would have flown to seek and succour her father; but she had not resolution to leave her mother in the agony in which she beheld her.

At length, however, the delicate and timid Phedora, who, hitherto, had never ventured

beyond the banks of the lake, roused to exertion by the violence of her agitation, resolved to accompany her daughter; intending, if she could find her husband, to incur any danger in offering him assistance. They proceeded together, through the underwood of the forest, towards the plain. The cold was intense, the firs appeared like trees of ice, their branches being hid under a thick covering of hoar frost. A mist obscured the horizon. Night's near approach gave to each object a still gloomier shade, and the ground, smooth as a glass, refused to support the steps of the trembling Phedora. Elizabeth, reared in this climate, and accustomed to brave the extremest severity of the weather, assisted her mother, and led her on. Thus a tree, transplanted from its native soil, languishes in a foreign land, while the young suckling, that springs from its root, habituated to the new climate, acquires strength, flourishes, and, in a few years, sustains the branches of the trunk that nourished it; protecting, by its friendly shade, the tree to which it is indebted for existence. Before Phedora had reached the plain her strength had totally failed: "Rest here, my dear mother," said Elizabeth, "and

let me go alone to the edge of the forest. If we stay longer, the darkness of the night will prevent me from distinguishing my father in the plain." Phedora supported herself against a tree, while her daughter hastened forward; and in a few seconds she reached the plain. Some of the monuments with which it is interspersed are very high. Elizabeth climbed upon the most elevated of them: her heart was full of grief, and her eyes dim with tears. She gazed around in vain for her father: all was still and lonely; the obscurity of night began to render the search useless. Terror almost suspended her faculties, when the report of a gun revived her hopes. She had never heard this sound but from the hand of her father, and, to her, it appeared a certain indication that he was near. She rushed towards the spot whence the noise proceeded, and, behind a pile of rocks, discovered a man in a bending posture, apparently seeking for something upon the ground. "My father, my father, is it you?" she exclaimed. He turned hastily; it was not Springer. His countenance was youthful, and his air noble: at the sight of Elizabeth he stood amazed. "Oh! it is not my father," resumed she with anguish,

"but perhaps you may have seen him on the plain? Oh! can you tell me where to find him?"—"I know nothing of your father," replied the stranger; "but surely you ought not to be here alone at this unseasonable hour; you are exposed to great danger, and should not venture."—"Oh!" interrupted she, "I fear nothing but losing my father." As she spoke she raised her eyes to heaven: their expression revealed, at once, firmness in affliction, and dignity united with softness. They expressed the feelings of her soul, and seemed to foretell her future destiny. The stranger had never seen a person, nor had his imagination ever painted a vision, like Elizabeth: he almost believed himself in a dream. When the first emotion of surprise had subsided, he inquired the name of her father; "Peter Springer," she replied.—"How!" he exclaimed, "you are the daughter of the exile residing in a cottage by the lake! be comforted, I have seen your father. It is not an hour since he left me; he intended to make a circuit, and must be at home ere this."

Elizabeth listened no longer, but flew towards the spot where she had left her mother; and on her she called with a voice

of joy, that the sound might reanimate her before she could explain the cause; but Phedora was gone. The terrified Elizabeth made the forest resound with the names of her parents. A well-known voice answered her from the side of the lake: she redoubled her speed, arrived at the hut, and found her father and mother at the door; their arms held forth to receive her. Mutual embraces were followed by mutual explanations. Each of them had returned home by a different road, but all were now united and happy. It was not till that moment that Elizabeth perceived the stranger had followed her. Springer immediately recognized him, and said, with profound regret, "M. de Smoloff, it is very late; but, alas! you know I am not permitted to offer you an asylum, even for a single night."—"M. de Smoloff!" exclaimed Elizabeth and her mother, "our deliverer! is it indeed he whom we behold?" They fell at his feet; and, while Phedora, unable to express her acknowledgments, bathed them with her tears, Elizabeth thus addressed him: "M. de Smoloff, three years have now elapsed since you saved my father's life; during that period not a day has passed on which our fervent

prayers have not been offered up to the Almighty to beseech him to reward and bless you."—"Your prayers then have been heard," answered Smoloff, with the most lively emotion, "since he has deigned to guide my footsteps to this blessed abode; the little good I did deserved not such a reward."

It was now night, profound darkness covered the forest. A return to Saimka, at this hour, would be attended with danger, and Springer knew not how to refuse the rights of hospitality to his deliverer; but he had pledged his honour to the governor of Tobolsk not to receive any one under his roof, and to fail in his word, solemnly given, was a dreadful alternative. He proposed therefore to accompany the youth to Saimka. "I will take a torch," said he; "I am well acquainted with every turn of the forest, and with all those places which we must avoid, and fear not to conduct you safely." The terrified Phedora rushed forward to prevent him; and Smoloff, addressing him respectfully, "Permit me, sir," said he, "to solicit a shelter in your cottage till break of day. I know what are my father's injunctions, and the motives which compel him to show you

so much severity; but I am certain that he would authorize me, on this occasion, to release you from your promise, and I will engage to return shortly and thank you, in his name, for the asylum you will have granted me." Springer overcame his scruples; he took the young man by the hand, conducted him into his cottage, and, placing him near the stove, seated himself by his side, while Phedora and her daughter prepared their repast.

Elizabeth was dressed, according to the costume of the peasants of Tartary, in trousers made of the skin of the reindeer, and a short petticoat of crimson stuff, looped up; while her hair, in graceful ringlets, almost reached the ground. A close vest, buttoned at the side, displayed, to advantage, the elegance of her form, and her sleeves, turned back above the elbow, discovered her beautiful shaped arm. The simplicity of her dress seemed to enhance the mild dignity of her manners, and all her gestures were accompanied with a grace, which did not escape the observation of Smoloff, who, as he watched her, experienced an emotion to which he had before been a stranger. Elizabeth beheld him with equal delight, but it

was a delight, pure as her mind; founded on the gratitude she owed him, and on the hope of his assistance, which she had so long indulged. That power who dives into the inmost recesses of the heart, beheld not in the heart of Elizabeth a single thought which had not, for its object, the happiness of her parents; for to them, exclusively of every other earthly attachment, was it devoted.

During supper young Smoloff stated that he had been three days at Saimka, where he had learned that a great number of wolves infested the neighbourhood; and that it was in contemplation, in the course of a few days, to commence a general chase, for the purpose of destroying them. At this intelligence Phedora changed colour; "I hope," said she, addressing herself to her husband, "that you will not join in this dangerous diversion; oh! do not expose your life, the greatest of my blessings."—"Alas, Phedora! what is it you say?" exclaimed Springer, with a sensation of grief which he could not repress; "of what value is my life? Were I gone, would it be any longer your destiny to remain in this desolate place? Do you not know what would restore liberty to yourself and to our child? Do you not

know"—Phedora interrupted him with an exclamation expressive of the anguish of her soul; Elizabeth rose from her seat, and drawing near her father, seized his hand; "My dear father," said she, "you know that, reared in this forest, I am ignorant of every other country. With you, my mother and myself are happy; in losing you, our happiness would be lost. I answer for her, as for myself: without you we could not be happy in any situation of the globe; not even in that country which you so much regret."—"Possibly, M. de Smoloff," resumed Springer, after a short pause, "you may think these words should bring me comfort; on the contrary, they plunge the poignard of grief still deeper in my bosom. That virtue which should be my delight, creates new pangs, when I reflect that it will, for ever, be concealed in this desert, a sacrifice to me. My Elizabeth will never be known, will never meet with the admiration and the love which are so justly her due." Elizabeth hastily interrupted him; "Oh, my father! placed between my mother and you, can you tell me I am not loved?" Springer, unable to moderate his affliction, continued thus—"Never will you enjoy that

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happiness which I receive from you; never will you hear the voice of a beloved child addressing you in angelic words of consolation. Your life will be spent without a companion, without any of the tender, the endearing ties of life, like a solitary bird wandering in a desert. Innocent victim! you know not the blessings from which you are debarred; but I, who no longer possess the power of bestowing them upon you, I know and feel—I deeply feel their value!”

During this scene, young Smoloff had, in vain, endeavoured to repress his tears; they had fallen more than once. He had attempted to speak, but his voice refused utterance; at last, after a pause of some minutes, “Sir,” said he, “from the melancholy office which my father holds, you must be well aware that I am not a stranger to the sight of distress. Often have I travelled through the different districts under his extensive jurisdiction. What lamentations have I heard! what solitary wretchedness have I witnessed! In the deserts of Beresow,* upon the borders

* Beresow, or Beresov, is a city of Siberia, situated in a province of the same name, to the north-east of Tobolsk, and 372 miles distant from it, in 64° N. latitude, and 64° 14' E. longitude. Prince Menzikof died there in exile in 1729. The district Beresov has some valuable gold mines.

of the Frozen Sea, I have seen men who possessed not, in the wide world, a single friend; who never received a caress, nor heard the soothing language of consolation. Insulated and separated from all mankind, they were not merely banished; their misery admitted of no alleviation."—"And, when Heaven has spared you and my child," interrupted Phedora, and addressing her husband, in an accent of tender reproach, "should you complain so bitterly? Had she been taken from you, what would you have done?" Springer shuddered at the idea. He seized the hands of his daughter and his wife, and, pressing them to his heart, he exclaimed tenderly, "O Heaven be my witness how strongly do I feel that I am not deprived of every blessing."

III.

AS soon as the morning dawned young Smoloff took his leave of the exiles. Elizabeth, with regret, saw him depart, for she was impatient to reveal her project to him, and to implore his assistance. Not a

moment's opportunity had presented itself for her to speak to him in private. Her parents had never quitted the apartment, and she could not address him unobserved in their presence. She hoped, however, as she should see him often, to be more fortunate another time; and therefore, as he took leave, she said, in the most anxious manner,

"Will you not come again, M. de Smoloff? Ah! promise me that this is not to be the last time I am to see the deliverer of my father."

Springer was surprised at the earnestness of her address, and felt somewhat uneasy. He reflected on the orders of the governor, and resolved not to disobey them a second time. Smoloff replied to Elizabeth's request, that he was certain of obtaining, from his father, an exception in his favour: and that he would go that very day to solicit it. "But, sir," he said to Springer, "when I am asking this favour for myself, can I not deliver any message from you? Is there any favour that you may also require at his hands?"—"No, sir," answered Springer with unusual gravity, "I have no request to trouble you with." His guest looked down dejected; then addressing himself to Phedora,

he repeated his question in nearly the same terms. "Sir," she replied, "I should be glad if the governor would allow myself and my daughter to go to Saimka, on Sundays, to hear mass." Smoloff undertook to obtain this permission, and departed with the benedictions of the whole family, and with the secret wishes of Elizabeth for his speedy return.

During his walk back to Saimka, Smoloff could think only of her. His imagination had been forcibly struck at her first appearance in the desert; and his heart had been deeply interested in the scene which he had afterwards witnessed between her and her parents. He recalled to his memory every word she had uttered; her looks, her manner: and his mind dwelt particularly upon the last words he had heard her utter. Without this last address, a sort of respect, approaching to veneration, would perhaps have deterred him from presuming to love her; but the eagerness with which Elizabeth had expressed a desire to see him again, and the tender sentiment with which her request had been accompanied, could not fail to excite in his mind a suspicion that she had been actuated by feelings similar to his own.

His ardent and youthful imagination dwelt upon the thought, and persuaded him that fate, not chance, had brought about the adventure of the preceding evening, and that a mutual sympathy now existed between them. He was impatient to read, in the innocent heart of Elizabeth, the confirmation of his hopes. Ah! how far was he from imagining the sentiments that he was destined, on a future day, to discover there.

After Smoloff's visit to the hut, Springer's melancholy seemed to have increased. He reflected upon the generosity, the intrepidity, the gentleness of character which this young man appeared to possess; and it was ever present to his mind, that such was the companion he would have chosen for his daughter. Her situation, however, prevented him from dwelling on the idea; and, far from being desirous of seeing Smoloff again, he dreaded his return; for it would have been an affliction infinitely more insupportable than any he had yet experienced, to see his child the victim of hopeless love.

One evening, while plunged in deep dejection, his head supported by his hand, his elbow resting on his knee, he heaved a deep sigh. Phedora dropped her needle, and,

fixing her eyes upon her husband, with an expression of the most heartfelt commiseration, she implored Heaven to enable her to banish his vain regret, and to pour the balm of consolation into his wounded soul.

Elizabeth, from a distant corner of the room, observed them both, and felt a secret joy, as she reflected that a day might possibly come, when she should be able to restore them to their former happiness; not doubting that Smoloff would encourage and facilitate her enterprise. A secret instinct assured her that he would be moved by it, and would assist her; but she feared the refusal of her parents, and particularly that of her mother. Nevertheless, to depart without their knowledge would be repugnant to her feelings, nay, would be impossible, as she knew not the name of their country, nor the nature of the offence for which she was to supplicate forgiveness of the Emperor. It was necessary, therefore, to discover to them her intention, and the present seemed to be a fit moment for the disclosure. Therefore, bending one knee to the ground, she fervently implored aid from the Almighty, and that he would incline her parents to grant her suit. Then, approaching her father, she

stood behind him, leaning upon the back of the chair on which he was seated. For some moments she remained silent, in the hope that he would perceive and speak to her; but he continued in the same dejected attitude, and she broke the silence thus: "Will you permit me, my father, to ask you a question?" He raised his head, and made a sign that she might proceed. "When M. de Smoloff inquired the other day, if you wished for any thing, you answered no. Is it true that there is nothing you wish for?"—"Nothing that he could procure me."—"And who then could grant your wish?"—"The hand of justice."—"Where, my father, is justice to be found?"—"In Heaven, my child; but if you mean upon earth,—no where." As he ceased speaking, a deeper gloom overcast his brow, and he resumed his melancholy attitude.

After a short pause Elizabeth again ventured to speak: "My dearest parents," said she, in a tone of excessive animation, "hear me; I have this day completed my seventeenth year. This was the day on which I received from you a being, that will be valuable indeed in my estimation, if to you I am allowed to devote it: to you whom

my soul reveres and cherishes as the living images of my Creator. From the time of my birth, not a day has passed unmarked by your benefits, unendeared by tokens of your love. Hitherto, the only return in my power to make has been gratitude and tenderness: but what avails gratitude if it be not shown? what avails tenderness if I cannot prove it?—Oh! my beloved parents, forgive the presumption of your child; once in her life she would do for you what, from the hour of her birth, you have so unceasingly done for her. Condescend then to entrust her with the secret of your misfortunes.”—“My child, what wouldst thou ask?” interrupted her father.—“That you would inform me of as much as it is needful for me to know, to be able to prove the extent of my regard for you: Heaven bear testimony to the motive which induces me to make this request. As she uttered these words, she fell on her knees before her father, and raised her eyes towards him, with a look of the most moving supplication. An expression so noble shone through the tears that overflowed her countenance, and the heroism of her soul reflected an air so angelic over the humility of her attitude,

that a suspicion of her project instantaneously darted across the mind of Springer. Unable to shed a tear, or to breathe a sigh, he remained silent, motionless, struck with a sort of awe like that which the presence of an angel might have inspired. No circumstance attending his misfortunes had ever had the power to move his soul to such a degree as the words that Elizabeth had uttered; and his firm spirit, which even regal dignity had not been able to intimidate, was subdued by the voice of his child, and he attempted in vain to strive against the emotions that overpowered it.

While Springer remained silent, Elizabeth continued kneeling before him. Her mother approached to raise her. Phedora had not observed the motion or the look which had revealed to Springer the secret of his daughter's heart; and she was still far from imagining the trial with which her tenderness was threatened. "Why," said she, "why do you hesitate to confide in your child the history of our misfortunes? Is it her youth that prevents you? Can you fear that the soul of Elizabeth will suffer itself to be weakly depressed by the knowledge of our reverse of fortune?"

"No," replied Springer, looking steadfastly on his daughter, "no, it is not weakness that I apprehend from her." From these words, and from the expressive look which accompanied them, Elizabeth saw that her father had understood her. She pressed his hand in silence, that he alone might comprehend her meaning, for she knew the heart of her mother, and was glad to retard the moment in which it must be afflicted. "Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Springer, "forgive me that I have dared to repine. I regretted the blessings of which I was deprived, but I knew not those thou hadst in store for me. Elizabeth, in this one happy day, you have made me ample amends for twelve years of suffering."—"My father," she replied, "say not again there is no real happiness on earth, when the child of such a parent can be blessed with hearing words like these. But, speak—tell me, I conjure you, your name, that of your country, and the cause of your unhappiness."—"Unhappiness! I am unhappy no longer: my country is wherever I can live with my daughter. The name in which I place my greatest glory is that of the father of Elizabeth."—"Oh, my child!" interrupted Phedora, "I did not think the

tenderness I bore you could admit of increase; but you have afforded consolation to your father."

At these words Springer's firmness was entirely subdued. He burst into tears, and, pressing his wife and daughter to his heart, repeated in a voice broken with sobs, "Pardon, O Most High! pardon an ungrateful being, who presumed to murmur at thy decrees; and, O God! withhold the chastisements which his temerity has deserved."

When these violent emotions had subsided, Springer said to his daughter, "My child, I give you my word that I will inform you of every particular which you wish to know; but you must wait some days. I cannot speak of my sufferings at the moment: you have taught me to forget them."

The obedient Elizabeth ventured not to press him further, determining to wait, with deference, till he should feel inclined to give the information he had promised. But she waited for that moment in vain; Springer appeared to dread it, and to avoid her. He had guessed her intention; and, though no language could express the gratitude and admiration of this fond parent, his tenderness would not permit him to grant the

consent which he knew she would entreat; nor did he consider himself absolutely authorized to refuse it. This was, indeed, the only resource from which he might hope to be re-established in his rights, and to replace Elizabeth in the rank to which she was born; but, when he reflected on the fatigues she must undergo, and on the dangers she must incur, the idea was insupportable. Willingly would he have sacrificed his own life to reinstate his family in their rank and possessions, but to risk that of his daughter in such an attempt was a trial to which he felt his courage was unequal.

The silence of her father taught Elizabeth the line of conduct she ought to pursue. She was certain that he had penetrated into her design, for he was more deeply affected than she had ever seen him; but, if he had approved of it, would he, with so much precaution, have avoided speaking to her upon the subject? Indeed, when she deliberately considered her scheme, it seemed, even to herself, so impracticable, that she feared her parents would only regard it as the effusion of filial enthusiasm. In order, therefore, to place her project in a point of view more favourable to its execution, she must

represent it divested of some of the greater obstacles by which it was opposed, and with this view, it was requisite to solicit the advice and assistance of Smoloff. Determining, therefore, to maintain silence upon the subject, and not to disclose the secret entirely to her parents, till she had conversed with him, she waited impatiently for his return.

Elizabeth foresaw that one of the strongest reasons that would withhold the consent of her parents, would be the difficulty of her undertaking to travel eight hundred leagues on foot, in the severest climate of the earth. To lessen this difficulty as much as possible, and to prepare herself for hardship and fatigue, she exercised her strength daily in the plains of Ischim. Whether the snow, drifted by the wind, beat against her with a violence that opposed her passage, or a thick mist, concealed, almost, the path before her, she relinquished not her resolution, sometimes, in contradiction even to the wishes of her parents; thus, by degrees, accustoming herself to endure the clemency of weather and their disapprobation.

IV.

SIBERIA, in winter, is subject to sudden storms. Often, during this season, when the sky appears serene, dreadful hurricanes arise instantaneously, and obscure the atmosphere. They are impelled from the opposite sides of the horizon; and, when they meet, the strongest trees in vain oppose their violence. In vain the pliant birch bends to the ground; its flexible branches with their trembling leaves are broken and dispersed. The snow rolls from the tops of the mountains, carrying with it enormous masses of ice, which break against the points of the rocks: these break in their turn; and the wind, carrying away the fragments, together with those of the falling huts, in which the terrified animals have in vain sought shelter, whirls them aloft in the air, and, dashing them back to the earth, strews the ground with the ruins of every production of nature.

One morning, in the month of January, Elizabeth was overtaken by one of these terrible storms. She was in the plain near the little chapel; and, as soon as the sud-

den darkness of the sky announced the approaching tempest, she sought shelter under its venerable roof. The furious wind soon attacked this feeble edifice, and, shaking it to its foundation, threatened every instant to level it with the ground. Elizabeth, prostrate before the altar, was insensible to fear. The storm she had heard destroying all around her excited in her breast no sensation but that of a reverential awe caused by a natural reflection on the Omnipotent Being from whose hand it came. As her life might be serviceable to her parents, she felt assured that Heaven would, for their sake, watch over and guard it, till she had delivered them from suffering. This sentiment, approaching almost to superstition, created by the fervour of her filial piety, inspired Elizabeth with a tranquillity so perfect, that, in the midst of warring elements, with the thunderbolts of Heaven falling around her, she yielded calmly to the heaviness which oppressed her, and, lying down at the foot of the altar, before which she had been offering up her prayers, she fell into a slumber, secure and peaceful as that of innocence reposing on the bosom of a father.

On this very day Smoloff had returned

from Tobolsk. After his arrival at Saimka he hastily proceeded to the cottage of the exiles. He brought the permission which Phedora had solicited. Her daughter and herself were allowed to attend divine service at Saimka every Sunday ; but, so far from any indulgence being extended to Springer the orders of the court respecting him were more strict than ever. And, in allowing young Smoloff to see him once more, the Governor of Tobolsk had consulted his feelings rather than his duty ; but this visit was to be the last : of this his father had exacted a solemn promise. Smoloff was grieved to the soul at so much severity ; but, as he drew near the dwelling of Elizabeth, his melancholy dispersed. He thought less of the pain of taking leave, under the cruel restriction imposed upon him by his father, than of the delight he should experience from seeing her again.

In the first ardent pursuit of the youthful mind, the enjoyment of the present felicity is so animated, so complete, that it obliterates all idea of the future, and engrosses the soul so entirely that no room is left for the anticipation of future distress. Happiness is a sensation too ardently felt by youth

to suffer them to waste a thought upon the instability of its duration. But when, on entering the cottage, Smoloff looked round for Elizabeth in vain, and reflected that he might not be able to prolong his visit until her return, his disappointment was too apparent to escape the most superficial observation. In vain did Phedora address him in the most affecting terms of gratitude, blessing the hand which had reopened for her the house of God, and had preserved the life of her beloved husband. In vain did Springer call him the protector, the comforter of the afflicted. He appeared almost insensible to their discourse, and, in the little that he spoke, the name of Elizabeth every instant escaped his lips. His evident embarrassment betrayed the emotions of his heart; and the disclosure rendered him the dearer to that of Phedora. His love for her daughter flattered her pride; and surely no mother had more reason to be proud of a child.

Springer was not less sensible of the merit of his daughter; but, fearing she would discover the visible partiality of the young man, which might disturb her peace, he reminded Smoloff of the obedience that was

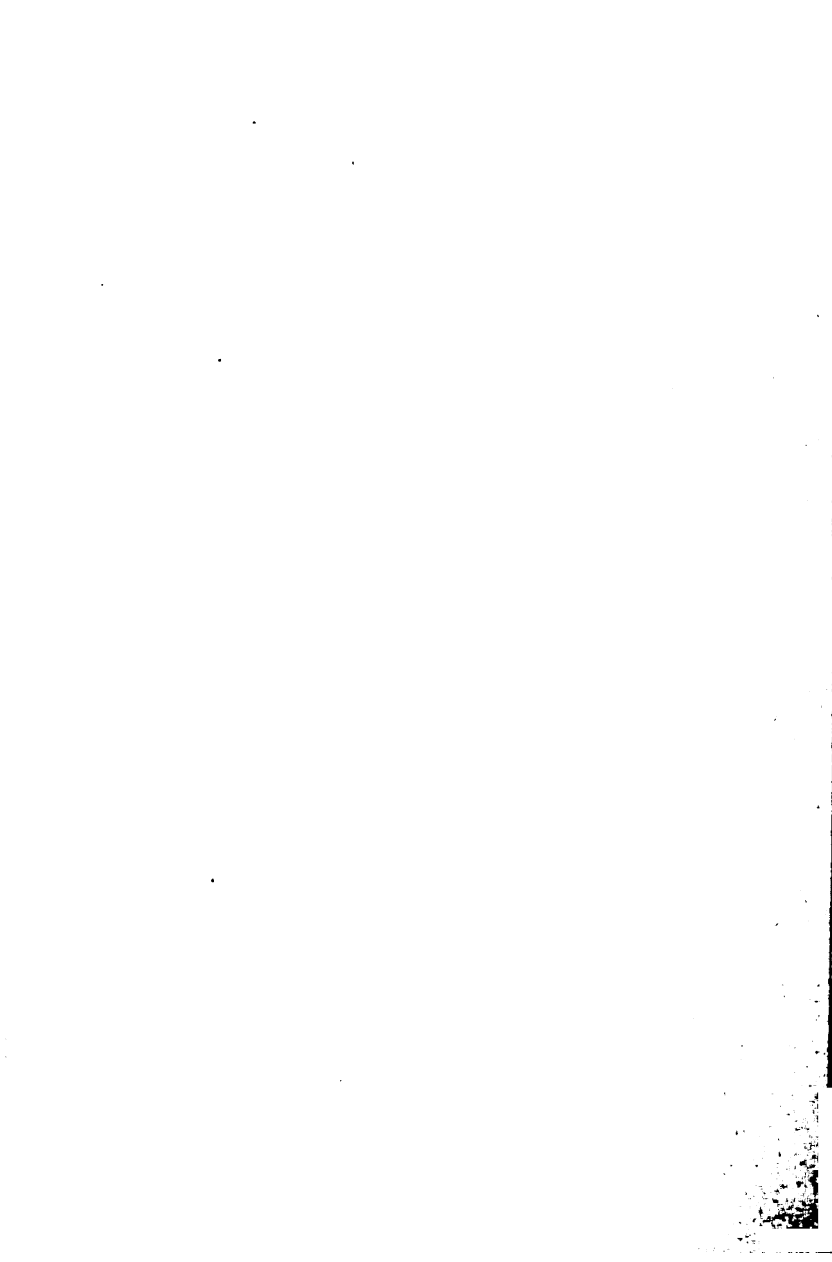
due to his father; thereby hoping to terminate a visit, which, by divers pretences, the youth had thought to prolong. It was, at this period, that the storm arose; and the parents trembled for the safety of their child. "Elizabeth! What will become of my Elizabeth?" exclaimed the agonized mother. Springer took his stick in silence, and went to seek his daughter; Smoloff rushed after him.

The tempest raged with terrific violence on every side; the trees were torn up by the roots, and any attempt to cross the forest would be attended with imminent danger. Springer remonstrated with Smoloff, and endeavoured, but in vain, to deter him from following. Smoloff saw all the danger, but he saw it with a secret satisfaction; he was happy to brave it for Elizabeth, as it might afford him opportunity of giving proof to her of an affection, which he would scarcely have dared to declare to her by any other means.

They proceeded till they reached the middle of the forest. "On which side shall we turn?" asked Smoloff.—"Let us proceed towards the plain," Springer replied, "she walks there every day, and has probably

taken shelter in the chapel." They said no more, but proceeded intrepidly on. Stopping to shelter themselves from the blows of the broken boughs, and from the fragments of rock which the wind whirled over their heads, they walked forward as fast as the snow, which beat in their faces, would permit.

On reaching the plain, the danger with which they had been menaced from the breaking of the trees ceased; but, in this exposed situation, they were sometimes driven backward, and at others thrown down by the violence of the tempest. At length they reached the chapel, in which they hoped Elizabeth had sought a refuge. But when they beheld this precarious shelter, the walls of which consisted only of slightly joined planks, that creaked in the wind and seemed every instant ready to fall, they began to shudder lest she might be within them. Animated with indescribable ardour, Smoloff rushed into the chapel, and, to his astonishment, beheld Elizabeth, not terrified, pale, and trembling, but in a peaceful sleep before the altar. Struck with unutterable surprise, he stops, points out to Springer the cause of his amazement; and, impelled by





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similar sentiments of veneration, they fall on their knees by the side of the angel, sleeping under the protection of Heaven. The father bent over his child, while Smoloff, casting down his eyes, retired some steps, not presuming to approach too near to such supreme innocence.

Elizabeth awoke, beheld her father, and, throwing herself into his arms, exclaimed, "Ah! I knew you watched over me." Springer pressed her to his heart. "My child," said he, "into what agonies have you thrown your mother and me!"—"O! my father! pardon me for causing those tears," answered Elizabeth, "let us hasten to relieve the terrors of my mother." In rising she perceived Smoloff. "Ah!" said she, in gentle accents of pleasure and surprise, "all my protectors have then been watching over me: Heaven, my father, and you." It was not without extreme difficulty that the young man could repress the emotions of his heart.

Springer resumed. "My dear child," said he, "you speak of rejoining your mother, but do you know whether it will be possible to do so? whether you will be able to resist the violence of a tempest which M.

de Smoloff and myself have escaped only by a miracle."—"I will try," answered she; "my strength is greater than you imagine; and I rejoice in an opportunity which enables me to show you how much it is capable of performing, when the consolation of my mother calls forth its exertion."

As she spake, unwonted courage beamed in her eyes; and Springer believed that he could depend upon her exertions. She rested on her father and Smoloff, who jointly supported her, and sheltered her head with their wide mantles. How much did Smoloff rejoice in that boisterous wind which obliged Elizabeth to trust to him for support! He thought not of his own life, which he would gladly have exposed a thousand times, to prolong those moments. He feared not even for the life of Elizabeth, which, in the ecstasy that possessed him, he would have defied the elements combined, to hinder him from preserving.

The sky now began to assume its serenity, the clouds dispersed, and the wind, by degrees, ceased. Springer recovered his spirits, but those of Smoloff were depressed. Elizabeth withdrew her arm, and chose to walk on unassisted, for she was desirous of bra

ving, before her father, the remainder of the storm. She was proud of her strength, and was eager to display before him, a proof of it; with the hope of convincing him that it would not fail, when she should undertake to obtain his pardon from the Emperor, were it necessary to go to the remotest extremity of the earth to seek it.

Phedora received them all with transports of joy, and fervently thanked Heaven for having restored them to her. She was delighted in again receiving her daughter; dried her dripping garments, and, taking off her fur bonnet, smoothed her long hair. For maternal cares, like these, which Elizabeth received daily from the hands of her mother, her affectionate heart became every day more grateful. Young Smoloff was affected at witnessing them; and felt that the happiness he should experience in becoming the husband of Elizabeth, would be much increased by being also the son of the amiable Phedora.

The storm had now entirely subsided, and night had begun to spread its dark shade over the cloudless sky. Springer pressed the hand of his guest, and, with a mixed sensation of sorrow and of tenderness, re-

mined him that it was time to depart Elizabeth then learned, for the first time, that he was come to take a farewell.—The colour forsook her cheeks at the intelligence, and her embarrassment became visible. “What,” said she to him, “shall I never see you again?”—“O yes!” replied he eagerly, “as long as you inhabit these deserts, and I am free, I will not quit Saimka. I shall see you at church whenever you come, and I shall see you on the plain upon the banks of the lake whenever this happiness is allowed me.” He suddenly stopped, astonished at his own feelings, and at what he had uttered; but Elizabeth did not understand him. In all he had said she only remarked the certainty of their meeting again, and that she should be able to consult him respecting her enterprise. Comforted by these hopes she took leave of him with less regret.

V.

WHEN Sunday arrived, Elizabeth and her mother, after an early breakfast, set out for Saimka. Springer bade them

adieu with a feeling of regret, as this was the first time, since his exile, that he had remained alone in the cottage. But he concealed his sensations and blessed them with composure, recommending them to the protection of the Supreme Being whom they were going to invoke. The weather was fine; the Tartarian peasant served them as a guide through the forest of Saimka; its distance appeared short. On entering the church every eye was turned towards them; but theirs were reverently cast down while their hearts were fixed upon God alone. They advanced to the altar, and, bending before it, offered their sincere supplications for the same object; and if those of Elizabeth were more comprehensive than the supplication of Phedora, the beneficent Being who knew their hearts heard them with equal indulgence.

During the time the ceremony lasted Elizabeth did not remove the veil which concealed her face. Her thoughts were so entirely engrossed by her Creator and her parents, that they did not extend even to him from whom she hoped for protection. The pious concert of voices which chanted the sacred hymns made an impression on her

senses which approached to ecstasy. Her imagination painted the heavens opening, and the Almighty himself presenting an angel to conduct her on her journey. This imaginary vision lasted as long as the music vibrated upon her delighted ear. When that ceased, she raised her head, and the first object that presented itself to her view was young Smoloff, leaning against one of the pillars, at a little distance, with his eyes fixed intently upon her. He appeared to her to be the angel that God had presented: the guardian angel who was to assist her in the deliverance of her father. Her eyes beamed with confidence and with gratitude. Smoloff was moved by their expression: it seemed to be in unison with what passed in his mind; for he also felt grateful for the happiness he enjoyed in again beholding her, and in believing himself beloved.

On leaving the church he proposed to conduct Phedora and Elizabeth in his sledge to the entrance of the forest. Phedora consented with pleasure, as she would thereby be the sooner able to rejoin her beloved husband. But Elizabeth was disappointed by this arrangement. She had flattered herself that, in the course of a walk, some

opportunity might have occurred of speaking to Smoloff in private. In a carriage this would be impossible. She could not speak on the subject before her mother, who, as yet, was wholly ignorant of her design, and would, on its first disclosure, reject it with terror, and forbid him to afford her any assistance. Yet it appeared to Elizabeth, that she ought not to lose such an opportunity of mentioning her scheme to him, as, possibly, none equally favourable might ever occur again. Thus was her mind agitated and perplexed, when the sledge had already passed the border of the forest, to which Smoloff had proposed to drive them. But, wanting resolution to leave Elizabeth, he went on till they reached the banks of the lake. There he was obliged to stop. Phedora descended first, and taking his hand, said, "Will you not sometimes walk this way?" Elizabeth, who followed her mother, whispered, in a faltering tone—"No, not this way, but to the little chapel on the plain, to-morrow." Thus did she innocently appoint a meeting, without thinking of the interpretation that Smoloff might give to her words. She fancied that she had spoken only of her father; and on see-

ing, in Smoloff's countenance, that her request had been heard, and would be granted, hers brightened with joy.

While Phedora and her daughter walked towards their dwelling, Smoloff, entranced with delight, returned alone across the forest. He could no longer doubt that Elizabeth loved him. And, with the knowledge he had of her, the certainty of this excited in his breast the most lively emotions of joy. He had never beheld beauty equal to hers: he had lately seen her, in the presence of her Maker, the image of piety and of innocence; he had also seen repeated proofs of the tenderness of her heart, in her conduct towards her parents; and how could a heart so tender fail of being induced to love the man to whom a father's life was owing. Ingenuous and candid, from her education in the midst of a desert, how should she have acquired the art of concealing her sentiments? Yet he felt astonished at her wishing to see him unknown to her parents; but he easily found excuses for an indiscretion which he dared to attribute to excess of love.

It was not with the embarrassment which is generally attendant on stolen meetings of

this nature, but with all the security of unsuspecting innocence, that Elizabeth repaired, on the following morning, to the chapel. Her steps were lighter, and her pace was swifter than usual; for she considered that what she was doing was the first movement she had made towards the liberation of her father. The sun shone with splendour on the snowy plains; and thousands of icicles, hanging suspended from the branches of the trees, reflected its bright image in various forms of beauty and grandeur; but this lustre, so brilliant and clear, was less pure and less noble than the soul of Elizabeth. She entered the chapel. Smoloff was not there; his delay disturbed her; a slight gloom overspread her countenance. It was not caused by disappointed vanity, nor even by neglected love. No passion, no foible could at this moment have found a place in her heart; but she dreaded lest some accident or unforeseen circumstance might have prevented the arrival of him whom she so anxiously expected. With fervency she implored of the Almighty not to prolong the perplexity she endured. During her supplication Smoloff entered: he was astonished to find her there before

him, who had hastened upon the wings of love.

The passions of the human heart are swift in search of their gratification; but Elizabeth this day afforded a proof that virtue, in the performance of its duty, was still swifter.

On seeing Smoloff, she raised her hands to Heaven in token of gratitude; then turning towards him with a graceful and expressive motion, "Ah! M. de Smoloff," said she, "how impatiently have I waited for you!" These words, the expression of her countenance, the exactness with which she had kept the appointment; all tended to confirm the delighted youth in the supposition that he was beloved. He was on the point of declaring to her the fervour by which he was animated; but she did not give him time: "Listen to me, M. de Smoloff," said she, "I have sought this opportunity of seeing you, that I might implore your assistance in an attempt to restore liberty to my father. Will you promise me your aid and counsel?" These few words completely overturned all the ideas that Smoloff had entertained. Distressed, embarrassed, he perceived his error; but it did not diminish

his love for Elizabeth. He knelt: she imagined that it was before God; but it was to her that this mark of veneration was paid, and he solemnly declared that he would perform every thing she required.

She resumed her discourse: "Since the dawn of reason enlightened my soul, my parents have been the sole objects of my thoughts; their love has been my greatest blessing, and to contribute to their happiness is my only wish. They are miserable. Heaven calls me to their relief, and has led you to this spot to aid me in fulfilling my destiny. My design is to proceed to Petersburg, to solicit my father's pardon." Smoloff, overwhelmed with astonishment, indicated, by his gestures, that the project appeared, to him, utterly impracticable: but she, hastily, continued, "I cannot tell how long this design has held possession of my mind. It seems to me that I received it with my existence; it is the first that I remember, and it has never quitted me. In my sleeping, as in my waking moments, it pursues me. It is this idea that has always occupied me when with you; and it was this which induced me to request to see you here, as it has inspired me with courage

sufficient to dread neither fatigue, nor poverty, nor opposition, nor death. Indeed, so bent I am upon leaving Siberia, that I should feel inclined to disobey my parents, were they to refuse their consent. You see, M. de Smoloff, that it would be in vain to remonstrate with me: my resolution is not to be shaken."

During this address, all the flattering hopes that Smoloff had entertained completely vanished; but his admiration soared far beyond the powers of description. Such heroism in a female, and in one so young, exceeded any thing that he had ever imagined; and his tears, which flowed unrestrained, were caused by a sensation scarcely less delightful than the transports of requited love. "Happy," said he, "happy far beyond desert, do I esteem myself, in thus being selected as your guide and counsellor; but you are not aware of the various obstacles"—"Two only have discouraged me," interrupted she; "and perhaps no one could remove them so effectually as you."—"Speak," said he, impatient to obey: "what is there you can ask which I will not willingly perform?"—"The obstacles," answered Elizabeth, "are these: I am a stranger to

the road, and my flight may injure my father. On you I rely for instruction in every thing that regards my journey—the towns I am to pass through; the houses founded for the accommodation of indigent travellers, on the hospitality of which I may depend for relief; and the mode in which I may get my petition presented to the Emperor. But first, you must pledge yourself that your father will not punish mine for the offence of his child.”—“Elizabeth,” said he, “do you know to what extent the Emperor is prepossessed against your father? Do you know that he regards him as his most inveterate enemy?”—“I am ignorant,” she replied, “of what crime my father is accused, I know not even his real name, nor that of his country; but I am convinced of his innocence.”—“How!” said Smoloff, “You know not the rank your father held, nor the name by which you must speak of him?”—“Neither,” answered she.——“Astonishing!” he exclaimed, “That neither pride nor ambition should have had any share in suggesting an enterprise to which your whole soul is devoted? You know not the honours you would regain; you think only of your parents. But what

is grandeur of birth to a soul like yours? What, to the sentiments which inspire it, is the lofty name of ——". "Hold," interrupted she, "the secret you are about to reveal belongs to my father, and from him only I must learn it."——"True," replied Smoloff, in a tone of enthusiastic admiration, "there is no principle of honour, no point of delicacy which is not an inmate in your soul."——Elizabeth resumed the subject of her expedition, to ask when Smoloff would give her the information that was requisite for it. "I must take time to consider it," answered he; "but, Elizabeth, do you think that it is possible for you to travel the 3,500 verstes which divide Ischim from the province of Ingria;* and to do this alone, on foot, and unprovided with money!"——"Ah!" exclaimed Elizabeth, "He who sends me to succour my parents will not abandon me."

The eyes of Smoloff were filled with tears.

* Ingria, or Ingermanland, is that province of European Russia situated at the extremity of the Gulf of Finland, which Peter the Great conquered from the Swedes in the year 1702, at the same time with Livonia, Esthonia, and a part of Finland, which now forms the government of Riga, Revel, and Wibourg. St. Petersburg is its capital, and Ingria forms the government of St. Petersburg.

After a moment's pause, he replied, "It is impossible even to think of commencing such an undertaking till the long days of summer. At this season it would indeed be impracticable. Even the sledges could not proceed, and the marshy forests of Siberia are all inundated. I will see you again in a few days; and will then state to you my real opinion concerning your project. At present I feel incapable of forming a correct judgment upon it. I will return to Tobolsk, and consult my father—he is the best of men. The situation of the exiles would be much more miserable than it now is, were he not governor of this district; and no one is more capable of appreciating a noble action than he. He cannot however assist you; his duty forbids it; but I pledge to you my honour that, so far from punishing your father for having given existence to a daughter so virtuous, it would be his greatest glory to call you his. Elizabeth! pardon me! my heart declares itself, in defiance of opposition. I know that yours can now hold no other sentiment than the glorious one that has so long engrossed it; and I expect not a return. But, should there come a day in which your parents, happy

and secure in their native land, shall no longer require your exertions, remember that, in this desert, Smoloff saw you, loved you, and would have preferred a life of obscurity and poverty with Elizabeth in exile, to all the glory that the world could offer." —He would have said more, but tears interrupted his utterance. He was amazed at the extraordinary emotion which agitated him. Till that moment he had never felt such weakness; but till that moment he had never loved.

Elizabeth had remained motionless during this unexpected declaration. The idea of any other than filial love was to her so new that she scarcely comprehended it. It might have appeared to her less strange had her heart been free to receive it. Had her parents been happy, Smoloff might have been loved: he may still be loved, should that event ever take place; but while they are in affliction, she will remain constant to her first passion, and to contain two, the human heart, comprehensive as it is, is not formed.

Elizabeth had never lived in society. A stranger to its customs and rules, she had, nevertheless, a sort of decorum, the attendant of virtue, which taught her, that, after a

declaration of love, she ought not to remain alone with the man who had presumed to make it. She was therefore preparing to leave the chapel, when Smoloff, who saw her design, said, "Elizabeth, have I offended you? I call to witness Him who sees the inmost recesses of the heart, that in mine there is not less of respect, than of love. He knows, that were you to command it, I would be silent and die: how then, Elizabeth, can I have offended you?"—"You have not offended me," she mildly replied, "I came here merely to inform you what I have it in contemplation to do for the relief of my parents: I have nothing further to say, and am now proceeding to rejoin them."—"Noble-minded girl, return to your duty. In associating me with it, you have rendered me worthy of you, and far from ever wishing, in the most secret thought, to turn you from its paths, I will devote my time solely to your service, in aiding you to fulfil it."

He then promised to give her, on the following Sunday, at Saimka, all the instructions and observations which might be requisite for her enterprise; and they parted, each looking forward, with eager expectation, to their next meeting.

When the Sunday arrived, Elizabeth so accompanied her mother joyfully to Saimka. She was anxious to see Smoloff again, and to receive from him the information which might accelerate her departure. But the service ended, and Smoloff did not appear. She became uneasy. While her mother still continued in prayer, Elizabeth inquired of an aged woman if M. de Smoloff had been seen in the church. The answer she received dismayed her: "No," replied the woman, "he departed two days since for Tobolsk." The object of her most ardent wishes seemed thus always to fly before her, at the very moment that she thought herself on the point of obtaining it. A thousand different terrors now presented themselves to her imagination. Smoloff had left Saimka, without remembering his promise: what reason had she to suppose that he would remember it at Tobolsk? And, if he did, how could he perform it? These thoughts haunted her all the remainder of the day; and at night, oppressed by the chagrin of disappointment, (which weighed the more heavily upon her, as there was no one to whom she could communicate it,) she retired early to her little apartment, to indulge, un-

restrained, in the grief which overwhelmed her.

As soon as she had quitted the room, Phedora, addressing herself to her husband, said, "I must disclose to you a source of solicitude which destroys my repose. Have you not marked the change which has recently taken place in Elizabeth? When with us, she seems at all times buried in thought: the name of Smoloff suffuses her countenance with blushes; his absence renders her unhappy. This morning, in the church, her eyes wandered on all sides; I heard her anxiously inquire if Smoloff was there; and she became pallid as death, when informed that he had departed for Tobolsk. Oh, Stanislaus! I remember, in those days which preceded my union with you, that it was thus I changed colour when your name was pronounced: it was thus that my eyes sought you in every place, and were filled with tears when the search was vain. Alas! these are symptoms of no transient attachment. How can I observe them in my child without dread? she is not destined, like her mother, to be happy." "Happy!" exclaimed Springer, with a sensation of poignant regret:—"happy in a desert, and in exile!"

"Yes, in a desert, in exile, in every place, blessed with the society of him I love."

She pressed his hand to her lips. But, soon returning to the subject which distressed her, she said, "I fear Elizabeth loves young Smoloff; and charming as she is, he will only behold in her the daughter of a poor exile. He will scorn her affection; and my child, my only child, will die with grief at seeing her love disdained." Tears suppressed her utterance, and the presence of Springer, which had consoled her under all her afflictions, could not allay the fears she entertained for her daughter's future happiness.

Springer reflected for a moment, and then replied; "Phedora, my beloved, be comforted; the conduct of Elizabeth has not been unnoticed by me; and perhaps I have seen farther than you into what passes in her soul. Another idea, and not that of Smoloff, engrosses it, I am certain of this. I am certain also, that, if we were to offer her to Smoloff, he would not condemn the gift, even in this desert; and this sentiment will render him deserving of her, if ever—— Yes, it will be so; Elizabeth will not always live secluded in this desert: her virtue will

not always remain buried in obscurity. She was not born to be unhappy; so much goodness, Heaven sooner or later will recompense."

This was the first time since his banishment, that Springer had appeared not to despair; Phedora argued from the circumstance the most pleasing presages; and, reassured by his words, she lay down composedly to rest.

VI.

FOR two months Elizabeth went every Sunday to Saimka, with the hope of seeing Smoloff, but in vain; and at last she was informed that he had left Tobolsk. All her hopes now vanished: she now no longer doubted his having entirely forgotten her; and she frequently shed tears of the bitterest sorrow at the thought, but for which the purest innocence could not have reproached her.

The end of April approached. The snow began to melt, and a verdant shade began to diffuse itself over the sandy shores of

the lake. The white blossoms of the thorn thickly covered its boughs, resembling flakes of newly fallen snow; while the blue-budded campanula, the downy mugwort,* and the iris, enameled the ground around its roots. The blackbirds descended in flocks on the naked trees, and were the first to interrupt the mournful silence of winter. Already upon the banks of the river, and sometimes on its surface, sported the beautiful mallard of Persia,† of bright flame colour, with a tufted head and ebony beak; and woodcocks of various species, some black with yellow beaks, others speckled with feathery ruffs around their necks, ran swiftly along the marshy grounds, or hid themselves among the rushes. In short, every symptom announced an early spring; and Elizabeth, foreseeing how much she should lose if a year so favourable for her expedition were suffered to pass by, formed the desperate resolution of undertaking it unaided, trusting for success to Heaven and her own firmness.

One morning Springer was employed in

* Mugwort, Southernwood. *Artemisia*.

† The Persian Duck. Probably the *Anas Rufina*, or beautiful tufted duck of Buffon, *Anas Sponsa*.

his garden ; whilst seated at a little distance, Elizabeth regarded him in silence. He had not yet confided to her the secret of his misfortunes ; and it was a confidence which she no longer sought. A kind of delicate pride had arisen in her soul, which had made her desirous of remaining in ignorance of the rank her parents held till the moment of her departure ; and to defer her request of knowing what they had lost, until she could answer, "I go to solicit that pardon which will restore happiness to all." Until this time she had depended upon the promises of Smoloff, and on them had founded what she considered reasonable hopes of success. But when these had failed, her sanguine imagination suggested others of which she resolved to speak. Before she ventured to begin, she, however, reflected upon the numerous objections that would be advanced, and the various obstacles that would be opposed to her scheme. That they were important she was certain : Smoloff had told her so ; and she was well convinced that the tenderness of her parents would even exaggerate them. What answer could be made to their remonstrances, their entreaties, their commands ? When they

should tell her that the blessing of revisiting their country would not be worth the terror they should suffer during the temporary loss of their child? She forgot that her father was near; and, bursting into tears, fell upon her knees to implore, from Heaven, that eloquence which could prevail against their arguments.

Springer, who heard her sob, turned hastily round, and running to her, raised her from the ground: "Elizabeth," said he, "what is the matter? What has happened to you? If you are afflicted, weep at least on the bosom of your father."—"Oh, my father!" she replied, "detain me no longer here; you know my wish; O grant it; I feel that Heaven itself calls me."

She was interrupted by the young peasant, their attendant, who, running towards them, cried, "M. de Smoloff—M. de Smoloff is here."

Elizabeth uttered a scream of delight. She took her father's hand, and, pressing it to her heart, exclaimed, "It is so; the Omnipotent himself calls me; he has sent him who will open for me the road, and will remove every obstacle. O my father! your

daughter will yet be able to break the chain which holds you a prisoner."

Without waiting for an answer, she flew to see Smoloff, and, in the way, met her mother, whom she seized by the arm, and embracing her, cried, "Come with me; he is returned: M. de Smoloff is returned."

On entering the cottage they perceived a gentleman, apparently about fifty years of age, in a military dress, accompanied by several officers. The mother and daughter started back in amazement. "This is M. de Smoloff," said the young Tartar. At these words all the hopes of Elizabeth were a second time destroyed. Her colour fled; her eyes were filled with tears. Phedora, alarmed at the excess of her emotion, placed herself before her, to conceal it from general observation. Happy would the afflicted mother have esteemed herself, if, by the sacrifice of her own life, her daughter could have been released from the fatal passion which she no longer doubted held possession of her soul.

The governor of Tobolsk dismissed his attendants, and, turning to Springer, said, "Sir, since the time that the court of Russia deemed it prudent to condemn you to banish-

ment, this is the first opportunity I have had of visiting this remote spot; and it is a duty now pleasing to me, since it afford me the opportunity of testifying to an exile so illustrious, how sincerely I feel for his misfortunes, and how deeply I regret that duty forbids me to offer the assistance and protection which otherwise I would gladly bestow."——"I expect nothing from men, sir," interrupted Springer, coldly, "I look not for their commiseration, as I hope nothing from their justice; and since my misfortunes have placed me at a distance from them, I shall pass my days contented in this desert."——

"Oh, sir!" replied the governor, with emotion, "for a man like you to live an exile from his country is a destiny indeed to be lamented!"——"There is one, sir, still more lamentable," replied Springer, "to *die* an exile." He said no more; for, had he added another word, he might have shed a tear, and the illustrious sufferer wished to appear above his misfortunes. Elizabeth, concealed behind her mother, anxiously watched the governor, to ascertain whether his manner and countenance announced a character which would encourage her to disclose her project to him. Thus the fearful

dove, before she leaves her nest, peeps from among the branches, and long and attentively surveys the heavens, to mark whether the appearance of the sky promises a serene day.

The governor remarked and knew her. His son had often spoken of her; and the portrait which his descriptions had drawn could resemble none but Elizabeth. "Madam," said he, addressing himself to her, "my son has mentioned you to me: you have made an impression upon his mind which time will never efface."—"Did he tell you, sir," hastily interrupted Phedora, "that she is indebted to him for the life of a father?"

"No, madam," answered the governor, "but he told me how anxious she is to devote hers to that father and to you."—"She is," said Springer, "and her affectionate regard is the only blessing we have now left, the only blessing of which mankind has not been able to deprive us." The governor turned aside to conceal his emotion. After a short pause, he addressed himself to Elizabeth, "Madam," said he, "it is two months since my son, then at Saimka, received an order from the Emperor to set off immediately to join the army, assembling in

Livonia. Without a moment's loss of time, he was obliged to obey; but, before his departure, he conjured me to convey to you a letter. I could not, without the most imminent danger, send it by a messenger: I could only deliver it myself, and now his commission shall be executed." Elizabeth, blushing, took the letter which he presented to her. The governor, observing the surprise of Springer and Phedora, exclaimed, "Happy are the parents from whom a daughter conceals only secrets like this." He then recalled his attendants, and in their presence said to Springer, "Sir, the commands of my sovereign still prevent me from allowing you to receive any one here; nevertheless, if any poor missionaries, who, I am informed, must cross these deserts, in their return from the frontiers of China, should come to your dwelling, to beg a night's lodging, you are permitted to receive them."

After the governor had taken leave, Elizabeth still kept her eyes fixed upon the letter she held in her hand, not daring to open it. "My child," said Springer, "if you are waiting for permission from your mother and myself to read your letter, you have it." With a trembling hand Elizabeth then

broke the seal ; and, as she perused the contents, she made frequent exclamations of gratitude and joy. When she had finished, she threw herself into the arms of her parents, and exclaimed, "The moment is arrived, every circumstance contributes to favour my enterprise ; Heaven approves and blesses my intention ; Oh, my parents ! will *you* not likewise bless it ?" Springer shuddered at the words she uttered ; he knew the intention to which she alluded ; but Phedora who had not an idea of it, exclaimed, "Elizabeth, what means this mystery ? what does that paper contain ?" She made a motion as if to take it ; but Elizabeth gently withdrawing her hand, "Oh, my mother, pardon me," said she : "I tremble to speak before you . you have not yet guessed at what I would say, and the idea of your terror disheartens me. This is now my only remaining impediment. I know not how to obviate it. Oh ! permit me to explain myself before my father only, you are not yet prepared as he is——" —— "No, my child," interrupted Springer, "do not separate us : do not that which exile and misfortune has never yet effected. Come to my heart, my Phedora, and if your courage fail you at the words

you are about to hear, may mine sustain your drooping spirits." Phedora, terrified, dismayed, seeing herself menaced by some dreadful calamity, but knowing not whence the stroke was to come, replied, in a tone of alarm, "Stanislaus, what can you mean? Have I not endured, with fortitude, every reverse of fortune? Nor will that fortitude forsake me now," added she, pressing to her heart her husband and her child; "between you it will sustain me against the worst that fate can do——." Elizabeth attempted to reply, but her mother would not hear her: "My child," exclaimed she with anguish, "ask my life, but do not ask of me to consent to our separation." These words proved that she had penetrated into the secret; and the pain of telling it to her was spared; but to induce her to consent seemed an undertaking so arduous that even the sanguine hopes of Elizabeth were daunted. Bathed in tears, trembling at the sight of her mother's agitation, Elizabeth in broken accents, uttered only these words: "Oh, my mother! if, for the happiness of my father, I asked of you some days only?"—"Oh! no, not one," exclaimed her mother in an agony, "what happiness could be worth such a price!

No, not one day! Oh, gracious Heaven! do not permit her to ask me." These words entirely subdued the courage of Elizabeth. Unable to utter what could, to such an excess, afflict her mother, she presented to her father the letter she had received from the governor of Tobolsk and made a sign that he should read it. He took it, and, in a faltering voice, read aloud the following lines, written by young Smoloff, at Tobolsk, about two months before :

"The greatest concern I experience, on leaving Saimka, Elizabeth, proceeds from the impossibility of informing you that an indispensable obligation forces me to an absence from you. I can neither see you, write to you, nor send you the information you have asked of me, without acting in opposition to the commands of my father, and without endangering his safety. Perhaps my wish to oblige you might have induced me to have failed in my duty towards him, had it not been for the example you have shown me. But after I had so lately learned what is due to a parent, I could not expose the life of mine. To you, however, I will confess that my duty was

not, like yours, performed with delight. I returned to Tobolsk with a broken heart. My father informed me that a mandate from the Emperor must transport me a thousand miles from you; and that this mandate must be obeyed immediately. I depart, Elizabeth, and you know not what I suffer. Ah! I do not ask of Heaven that you should ever know my feelings.

“I have opened my heart to my father. I have made you known to him, and his tears have flowed at the recital of your project. I believe he will visit the district of Ischim this year, and that it will be expressly to see you. In the mean time, he will, if possible, convey to you this letter. I depart with greater tranquillity, Elizabeth, since I leave you under the protection of my father. But do not, I conjure you, do not think of setting out on your expedition until my return; I expect it will be in less than a year. I will be your conductor, and your guard, to Petersburg, and will present you to the Emperor. Do not fear that I will address you again on the subject of my love. No, I will but be as a friend, a brother; and, if I serve you with all the fervour of passion, I swear never to address you but in a lan-

guage pure as that of innocence, as that of angels or yourself."

The following postscript was written by the governor himself:

"No, madam, it is not my son that must conduct you. I doubt not his honour, but yours must be placed beyond the reach of suspicion. When, at the court of Russia, you exhibit instances of virtue too heroic not to be crowned with success, the breath of envy must not whisper, that you were conducted thither by a lover, and thus tarnish the noblest instance of filial piety the world can boast of. In your present situation there are no protectors worthy to guide your innocence but Heaven and your father. Your father cannot accompany you, but Heaven will not forsake you. Religion will lend you her aid: shield yourself therefore under her guidance. You know to whom I have given permission to enter your dwelling. In entrusting you with these directions, I render you the depository of my fate. Were this letter to be made public: were it to be known that I had favoured your departure, my ruin

would be the inevitable result; but I have no fear; I know in whom I confide, and what may be expected from the heroism and honour of a daughter willing to sacrifice her life for a father."

As he finished the letter, the voice of Springer became firmer and more animated. He gloried in the virtues of his daughter and in the admiration which they excited. But the tender mother thought only of the danger of losing her. Pale, motionless, unable to weep, she regarded her child in silence, and raised her eyes to Heaven. Elizabeth threw herself on her knees before them both. "Oh, my parents," said she, "permit me to speak: in this humble attitude should the greatest of all blessings be solicited. I presume to aspire to that of restoring you to liberty, to happiness, and to your country; for more than a year has this been the object of my fondest hopes. The season for it approaches, and you would forbid me to attempt it. If there be a blessing greater than that which I entreat, refuse me this, I will consent; but if there be not——" Agitated, and trembling, the accents she would have uttered

died unfinished on her lips; and, by looks and motions of the most earnest supplication only could she finish her prayer. Springer laid his hand upon the head of his daughter and said not a word: her mother exclaimed, "Alone, on foot, without help! Oh, no, I cannot! I cannot!"—"My mother," answered Elizabeth eagerly, "do not, I beseech you, do not oppose my wish. You would not, if you knew how long I have indulged it, and how much consolation I have derived from it. As soon as my reason enabled me to comprehend the cause of your unhappiness, I resolved to dedicate my life to the removal of it. Happy was the day on which I first contemplated the design of liberating my father! Blessed the hope which supported me when I saw you weep! Long ago would the affliction of witnessing your silent sorrow have overwhelmed me, had I not reflected, 'It is I who may restore that of which you may lament the loss.' If you deprive me of this hope, in which all my thoughts are centred, I shall no longer attach a value to life, and my days will linger away in despair. Oh! pardon me for grieving you. No, if you forbid my departure, I shall not die, since my death would be an

additional source of affliction to you. But I entreat of you not to oppose my happiness. Tell me not that my enterprise is impracticable. My heart replies that I can accomplish it. Heaven will supply me with strength when I go to claim justice, and with eloquence to obtain my demand. Nothing will daunt me : neither sufferings nor contempt ; neither the dazzling splendour of a court nor the awful brow of majesty ; nothing but your refusal."—" Cease, Elizabeth, oh, cease !" interrupted Springer : " my ideas are confused ; my soul, till now, never sunk before a noble action : till this moment it never heard of virtue too heroic for its strength to bear. I did not think myself weak ; Oh, my child ! you now teach me that I am : no, I cannot consent." Encouraged by his refusal, Phedora, taking her daughter's hands, said, " Hear me, Elizabeth. If your father betrays weakness, you may well excuse it in your mother. Pardon her that she has not resolution to give you permission to display your virtue. Strange ! that a mother must ask her child to be less excellent ; but your mother only asks it, she does not command ; possessed of such greatness of soul, you ought to receive no command but from the dictates of your

own heart."—"My dear mother," replied Elizabeth, "yours shall ever be held sacred. If you desire me to remain here, I hope I shall have resolution enough to obey without repining; but suffer me to hope that my scheme will yet receive your assent. It is not the result of a moment's enthusiasm, but of the reflection of many years; and it is established upon reason as well as upon affection. Does there exist any other means of rescuing my father from exile? During the twelve years that he has languished here, what friend has undertaken his justification? And were there one who dared to do it, would he dare to say as much as I should? Would he be instigated by motives similar to mine?—Oh, no, let me indulge the thought that Heaven has reserved for your child the blessing of restoring you to happiness, and do not oppose the glorious undertaking with which Heaven has designed to charge her. Tell me what it is you consider so alarming in the enterprise? Is it my temporary absence? Have I not often heard you lament that exile which forbids you the hope of bestowing me in marriage? And would not a husband have separated me from you entirely? Is it danger? there exists none.

the winters of this climate have inured me to the utmost severity of the weather, and the daily exercise I have taken on these plains have enabled me to bear the fatigue of long travelling. Are you alarmed on account of my youth? it will be my support: the weak meet with general assistance. Or do you fear my inexperience? I shall not be alone: do you remember the words of the governor's letter? he permits the poor missionary to take shelter under our roof, for the purpose of affording me a guide and a protector. You see that every danger, every obstacle is removed. Nothing is wanting but your consent and your benediction."—"And you must beg your bread," exclaimed Springer, in a tone of poignant distress. "The ancestors of your mother, who formerly reigned in these territories; and mine, who were seated on the throne of Poland, will look down and see the heiress of their name begging her daily bread in that Russia, which has made, of their kingdoms, provinces to her empire."—"If such is the royal blood that flows in my veins," replied Elizabeth, in accents of modest surprise, "if I am a descendant of monarchs; if two diadems have graced the brows of my forefathers, I hope

to prove myself worthy both of them and of you, and never to dishonour the illustrious name they have transmitted to me; but poverty will not dishonour it. Why should not the daughter of the Seids, and of Sobieski, have recourse to the charity of her fellow-creatures? How many, precipitated from the height of human grandeur, have implored it for themselves! Happier than they, I shall implore it only in the service of my father."

The noble firmness of Elizabeth, and the pious pride which sparkled in her eyes, at the thought of humbling herself for the sake of her father, gave to her discourse such animation, and such strength and authority, that Springer was unable to resist. He felt that he had no right to prevent his daughter from displaying her heroic virtue; that he should be culpable in detaining her in the obscurity of a desert. "Oh, my Phedora!" he cried, tenderly pressing the hand of his wife, "shall we condemn our heroic child to end her days here unknown? Shall we deprive her of the prospect of being the happy mother of children resembling herself? Take courage, my Phedora! This will be the only possible means of restoring her to a world of which she will be the ornament; let us grant the

permission she solicits." At this moment the feelings of the mother triumphed over those of the wife; and for the first time did Phedora presume to resist the most sacred of human authorities: "Never, never will I give my permission; even you, Stanislaus, will entreat it in vain. I shall have courage to resist. What! shall I expose the life of my child? shall I consent to see my Elizabeth depart, to hear on some future day that she has perished with cold and by famine, in a frightful desert, and live to deplore her loss? Can such a request be made to a mother? Oh! Stanislaus! is it possible there can be a sacrifice I would not make to you, and a grief in which all your endeavours to console me would be vain?" She ceased to speak; her tears no longer flowed; the anguish of her mind was unutterable. Springer, unable to endure the sight of her distress, exclaimed, "My child, if your mother cannot consent, you must not go."—"No, my mother, if you desire it, I will stay," said Elizabeth, embracing her with an ecstasy of tenderness; "never will I disobey you. But perhaps the Almighty will obtain from you that which you have refused even to my father. Join with me in entreaties, my mother; let us ask

of Heaven the conduct we must pursue; it is its wisdom that must enlighten, its support that must sustain us; from it proceeds all truth, and from it only can we learn submission to its decrees.

While Phedora prayed, tears again came to her relief. That piety which calms and softens human affliction, and which possesses itself of the heart to chase thence the agonies of sorrow: that divine piety which never prescribes a duty, without pointing out its recompense, and which never fails to pour the balm of consolation into the souls of those who humbly invoke it, touched the soul of Phedora. The approbation of men can obtain from the ambitious character, which places all its happiness in glory, a sacrifice of the tenderest affections, but religion alone can obtain such a sacrifice from hearts like that of Phedora, whose happiness centred solely in those she loved.

VII.

ON the following day, Springer, being alone with his daughter, gave her a narration of his misfortunes. He informed her of the dreadful wars which had afflicted the kingdom of Poland, and in what manner that unfortunate nation had at last been subverted.—“My only crime, my child,” said he, “was too strong an attachment to my country, to endure the sight of its slavery. The blood of some of its greatest monarchs flowed in my veins. Its throne might have fallen to my lot, and my services and my life were due to the country from which all my glory was derived. I defended it as I ought. At the head of a handful of noble Poles I fought, to the last extremity, against the three great powers which were combined to destroy it; and, at length, overpowered, by the numbers of our enemies, we were compelled to yield, under the walls of Warsaw, in sight of that great city, delivered up to flames and pillage. But, though forced to submit to tyranny, at the bottom of my heart I resisted still. Ashamed to remain in my native country, which was no longer in the possession of my

countrymen, I sought allies to aid me in restoring to Poland its existence and its name. Vain effort, ineffectual attempt! each day riveted faster those chains which my feeble endeavours were unable to break. The lands of my ancestors lay in that part of the country which had fallen under the dominion of Russia. I lived upon them with Phedora, and should have lived with felicity unequaled, had not the yoke of the stranger weighed heavily upon my mind. My open murmurs, and still more the number of persons who had been injured by the Russians, and who resorted to my house, roused the alarm of an arbitrary and suspicious monarch. One morning I was torn from the arms of my wife, from yours, my child, and from my home. You were then but four years of age; and your tears flowed not for your own misfortunes, but because you saw your mother weep. I was dragged to the prisons of Petersburgh. Phedora followed me thither; where the only favour she could obtain was permission to share in my confinement. We lived nearly a year in those dreadful dungeons, deprived of air, and nearly of the light of Heaven, but not of hope. I could not persuade myself but that a just monarch would forgive a pri

vate citizen for having endeavoured to maintain the rights of his country, and that he would trust to the promise I gave of future submission. I had judged of mankind too favourably: I was condemned unheard, and was banished for life to the deserts of Siberia. My faithful companion would not abandon me: and, in accompanying me, she seemed to follow the dictates of her heart rather than those of her duty. Yes, had I been condemned to linger out my existence in the frightful darkness of the terrific Beresow, or amidst the undisturbed solitudes of the lake Baikal, or of Kamtschatka,* she would have not forsaken me. In short, had my destiny been rendered even more miserable than it now is, my Phedora would still have proved my consoling angel. To her goodness, to her piety, to her generous sacri-

* Kamtschatka is a large peninsula at the north-east extremity of Asia. It was discovered by the Russians in 1698, and made tributary in 1711. It has two volcanoes, one of which emitted considerable flames in 1762, and again in 1767, and iron mines which have been worked with success from the year 1760. Its two principal ports are Kamtschatka and Awatchka, called also Port St. Peter and St. Paul. The city of Bolchetskoioistrog, which, as the residence of the governor, is deemed the capital of Kamtschatka, contains nearly five hundred tolerably well-uilt houses.

fice, I shall ever believe I am indebted for my milder doom. Oh, my child! it is to her that I owe all the solace of my life, while in return I have associated her in my misfortunes."—"Misfortunes, my father," said Elizabeth; "when you have loved her so tenderly, so constantly!" In these words Springer recognised the heart of Phedora, and perceived that Elizabeth, like her mother, could live contented with the man she loved. "My child," resumed he, returning young Smoloff's letter, which he had kept since the preceding evening, "if I shall one day owe to your zeal and courage the restoration of that rank and wealth which I no longer desire, but for the purpose of placing you in the bosom of prosperity, this letter will remind you of our benefactor. Your heart, Elizabeth, is grateful, and the alliance of virtue can never disgrace the blood of royalty." Elizabeth coloured as she received from her father the letter; and, placing it in her bosom, she answered, "The remembrance of him, who pitied, who loved, and who served you, shall ever be cherished by me."

For some days the departure of Elizabeth was not mentioned. Her mother had not yet consented; but, from the air of melan-

choly which pervaded all her actions, and from the deep dejection of her countenance, it was visible that the solicited consent was in her heart, and that all hope of resistance had forsaken her.

One Sunday evening, the family was assembled at prayer, when a gentle tapping at the door disturbed them. Springer opened it, and a venerable stranger presented himself. Phedora started up, exclaiming in agony, "Oh Heaven! this is he who has been announced to us; it is he who comes to deprive me of my child." She hid her face with her hands; even her piety could not induce her to welcome the servant of God. The missionary entered. A long white beard descended from his breast. He was bent more by long labours than by age. The hardships of his life had worn his body and strengthened his soul. There was an expression of sorrow in his countenance: it was that of a man who had suffered much, but had experienced something consolatory; of a man who felt that he had not suffered in vain: the whole of his appearance inspired the beholder with veneration.

"Sir," said he, addressing himself to

Springer, "I enter your dwelling with a joyful heart, the blessing of God is upon this cottage, for it contains a treasure more precious than gold and pearls; I come to solicit a night's lodging." Elizabeth hastened to fetch him a seat. "Young maiden," said he to her, "you have early trod the paths of virtue, and, in the spring-time of human life, have left us far behind." He was preparing to seat himself, when the sighs of Phedora arrested his attention; addressing himself to her, "Christian mother," said he, "why do you weep? is not your child favoured by the Most High? Heaven conducts her steps, and you should consider yourself blessed far beyond the common lot of parents. If you thus grieve because the call of virtue, for a short time, separates you from your child, what must become of those mothers who see their offspring torn from them by the ways of vice, and lost to them for eternity?"—"Holy father! if I am to see her no more!" exclaimed the afflicted Phedora.——"You *would* see her again," he answered with animation, "in that celestial paradise which will be her inheritance; but you *will* see her again on earth; the difficulties of her undertaking are great

and various, but God will protect her: he tempers the wind to the clothing of the lamb. '

Phedora bowed her head in token of resignation. Springer had not yet spoken. His heart was oppressed: he could not utter a word. Elizabeth herself, who never before had felt her courage relax, began to experience sensations of weakness. The animated hope of rendering service to her parents had, hitherto, absorbed every idea of the grief of leaving them; but now, when the moment was arrived, that she could say to herself, "To-morrow I shall not hear the voice of my father, to-morrow I shall not receive the fond caresses of my mother; perhaps a year may pass away ere such happiness be mine again." She now felt as if the success of her enterprise could scarcely make her amends for so distressing a separation. Her eyes became dim, her whole frame was agitated, and she sunk weeping upon the bosom of her father. Ah, timid orphan! if already you extend your arms to your protector, and, on the first approach of your undertaking, bend to the ground as a vine without support, where will you find that courage which may en-

able you to traverse nearly half the globe separated from them?

Before they retired to rest the missionary supped with the exiles. Freedom and hospitality presided at the board, but gaiety was banished; and it was only by the utmost effort that the exiles suppressed their tears. The missionary regarded them with tender concern. In the course of his long travels he had witnessed much affliction, and the art of bestowing consolation had been the principal study of his life. For different kinds of sorrow he pursued different methods: for every situation, for every character, he had words of comfort; nor did he often fail to afford relief. He well knew that if it is possible to withdraw the mind from the contemplation of its own sorrows, by presenting the image of some calamity greater than the one lamented, the tears that flow through pity will soften the agony of woe. Thus, by relating the long history of his own sufferings, and of the various distressing scenes he had witnessed, he, by degrees, attracted the attention of the exiles, moved them with compassion for the sufferings of their fellow-creatures, and led them to reflect that their lot had been mild, compared with that of many. What

had not this venerable old man seen? What could he not relate? He, who, for sixty years, at the distance of two thousand miles from his country, in a foreign climate, and in the midst of persecutions, had laboured incessantly in the conversion of savages, whom he entitled brethren, and who were not unfrequently the most inveterate of his persecutors? He had visited the court of Peking, and had excited the astonishment of the Mandarins by the extent of his learning, and still more by his rigid virtue and his austere self-denial. He had assembled together tribes of wandering savages, and had taught them the principles of agriculture. Thus were barren wastes changed into fertile lands: thus did savages become mild and humane; and families, to whom the fond titles of father, of husband, and of son were no longer unknown, raised their hearts to Heaven in tributes of thanksgiving. All these blessings were the result of the pious labours of one man. These people did not condemn the missions of piety. They presumed not to say that the religion which dictates them is severe and arbitrary; and still further were they from affirming that men who practise that religion with such success of charity and love

towards their fellow-creatures are useless and ambitious. But why not pronounce them ambitious? In devoting their lives to the service of their fellow-creatures do they not aspire to the highest of rewards? Do they not seek to please their Maker, and to gain the reward of Heaven? None of the most celebrated conquerors of the earth ever raised their aspiring thoughts so high: they were satisfied with the esteem of men, and with the dominion of the world.

The good father then informed the exiles, that, recalled by his superior, he was now returning, on foot, to Spain, his native country. On his road thither he was to pass through Russia, Germany, and France; but he seemed to think little of the journey. The man who had traversed vast deserts that yielded no other shelter from the inclemency of weather than a den; no pillow on which to rest the weary head but what a stone afforded, and whose only food had been a little rice-flour moistened with water, might well consider himself at the period of his labours on approaching to civilized nations; and Father Paul almost fancied himself in his own country, when he found himself once more among a Christian people. He re-

lated accounts of the dreadful sufferings he had endured, and of the difficulties which he had overcome, when, after passing the wall of China, he had entered the extensive territories of the Tartars.* He stated that, at the entrance of the vast deserts of Songria, which appertain to China, and which serve it as a boundary on the side of Siberia, he had discovered a country abounding in rich and valuable furs. By means of this commodity it was able to maintain an extensive commerce with European nations; but no traces of their industry had as yet reached that distant spot; no merchant had hitherto dared to carry his gold, or attempt a lucrative traffic, where the missionary had ventured to plant the cross, and had distributed blessings: so true is it that charity will stimulate to enterprises from which even avarice recedes.

A bed was prepared for Father Paul in the little chamber before occupied by the Tartar peasant, who now slept, wrapped up in a bearskin, near the stove. As soon as day began to dawn, Elizabeth rose. She ap-

* Tartary, in general, signifies indefinitely all the countries of the North of Persia, from Hindoostan and China to the Frozen Ocean, and from the Black Sea and the boundaries of European Russia to the eastern oceans.

proached softly to Father Paul's door, and hearing that he had already risen, she requested permission to enter and converse with him in private; as she felt that she dared not speak concerning her project before her parents, much less to express her wish that they might set out, the following morning, on their journey. She related to him the history of her life: it was a simple but affecting story, which consisted chiefly of anecdotes of mutual tenderness between her parents and herself. In the long recital of her doubts and hopes she had occasion, more than once, to pronounce the name of Smoloff; but it seemed as if this name occurred only to heighten the picture of her innocence, and to show that it was not wholly through the absence of temptation she had preserved so entire the purity of her heart. Father Paul was deeply affected with the narration. He had made the tour of the globe, and had seen almost all that it contained; but a heart like that of Elizabeth was new to him.

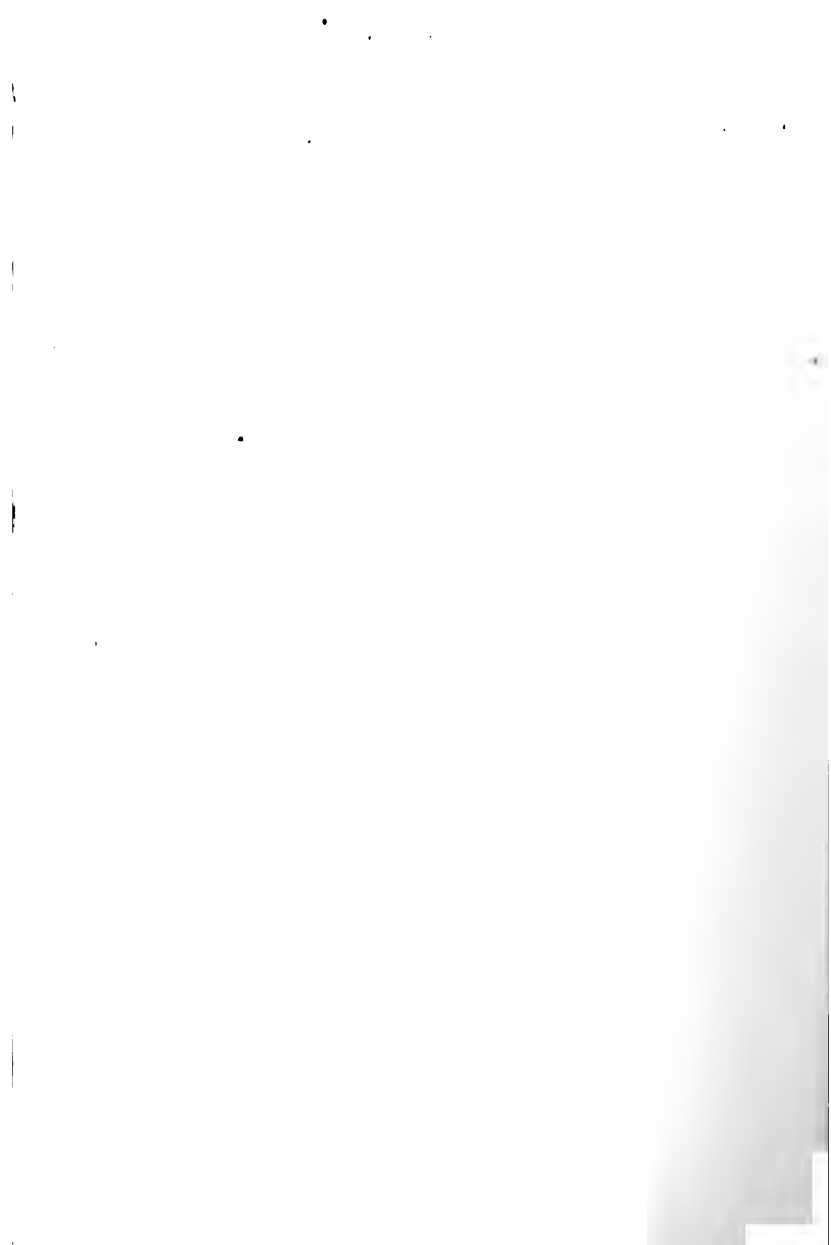
Springer and Phedora knew not that it was their daughter's intention to leave them on the morrow; but, when they embraced her in the morning, they felt that sensation of involuntary terror which all animated be-

ings experience on the eve of a storm that threatens them. Wherever Elizabeth moved, Phedora followed her with her eyes; and she often seized her suddenly by the arm, without daring to ask her the question that hovered on her lips. But she spoke continually of employments that she had for her on the following day, and gave orders for different works to be done several days hence. Thus did she endeavour to reassure herself by her own words; but her heart was not at ease, and the silence of her daughter spoke most feelingly to it of her departure. During dinner, she said, "Elizabeth, if the weather be fine, to-morrow you shall go, in your canoe, with your father, to fish in the lake." Her daughter looked at her in silence, while the tears involuntarily fell from her eyes. Springer, agitated by the same anxiety as Phedora, addressed himself to her hastily: "My child," said he, "did you hear your mother's desire? you are to accompany me to-morrow." Elizabeth reclined her head upon her father's shoulder, saying, in a whisper, "To-morrow you must console my mother."---Springer changed colour. It was enough for Phedora. She asked no more; she was certain that the departure of her child had been mentioned.

but it was a subject she wished not to hear, for the moment that it was spoken of before her must be that of giving her consent, and she indulged the hope, that, till this consent was granted, Elizabeth would not dare to leave her home. Springer collected all his firmness, for he saw that, on the morrow, he must sustain the loss of his child, and the anguish of his wife. He knew not whether he could survive the sacrifice he was about to make; a sacrifice to which he never could have submitted, but from the excess of love he bore his daughter. Therefore, concealing his emotion, he received the intelligence with apparent composure, and feigned to be content, in order to bestow upon her the only recompense worthy of her virtue.

How many secret emotions, how many afflicting unobserved sensations agitated the minds both of the parents and the child on this day of trial! Sometimes they exchanged the most tender caresses, at others they appeared a prey to the most heartfelt grief. The missionary sought to rouse their spirits, by reciting all the histories, in the sacred writings, in which Providence had rewarded, in an especial manner, the sacrifices of filial piety and paternal resignation.

He likewise gave them hints that the difficulties of the journey would not be great, as a man of high consequence, whom he would not name, but whom they easily guessed, had furnished him with the means of rendering it easier and more pleasant than it otherwise could have been. Thus passed the day, and, when night arrived, Elizabeth, on her knees, in broken accents, entreated her parents' blessing. Her father approached her. The tears streamed down his manly cheeks. His daughter held out to him her arms: he beheld, in her motion, the sign of a farewell. His heart became too much oppressed to suffer him to weep; and, laying his hands upon her head, he, in silence, recommended her to the protection of the Almighty, for he had not the courage to utter a word. Elizabeth, then, turning round to her mother, said, "And you, my mother, will you not likewise bestow your blessing upon your child?"—"To-morrow," replied Phedora in a voice almost stifled with the agony of grief, "To-morrow!"—"And why not to-day, my mother?"—"Oh! yes," answered Phedora, running to her, "to-day, to-morrow, every day." Elizabeth bowed her head.





ELIZABETH. Page 113.

while her parents, their hands joined, their eyes raised, with trembling voices pronounced a solemn benediction.

The missionary, with a cross in his hand, stood at a little distance, praying for them: it was the picture of virtue praying for innocence; and if such invocations ascend not to the throne of Heaven, what can those be which have a right to attain it?

It was now the middle of May: that season of the year when, between the deepening shades of twilight and the glimmering dawn of the day there are scarcely two hours of night. Elizabeth employed this time in making preparations for her departure. She had provided herself with a travelling dress, and this, with a change of shoes and stockings, she packed in a bag of reindeer skin. It had been her constant practice, for nearly a year, to work at night after she had retired to her chamber, that she might get these things in readiness unknown to Phedora. During the same period of time she had reserved from each of her collations, some dried fruits and a little flour, in order to defer as long as possible that moment when she must have recourse to the charity of strangers. But she was deter-

mined not to take any thing from the dwelling of her parents, where little was to be found but what necessity required. The whole amount of her treasure was eight or ten copecks.* This was all the money she possessed, all the riches with which she undertook to traverse a space of more than eight hundred leagues.

"Father," said she to the missionary, knocking softly at his door, "let us now depart while my parents are asleep. Do not let us awake them; they will grieve soon enough. They sleep tranquilly, thinking that we cannot escape without passing through their chamber. But the window of this room is not high. I can easily jump out, and will then assist you in getting down." The missionary agreed to this stratagem of filial tenderness, which was to spare the parents and child the agonies of such a parting. They left the house; and, as soon as they were in the forest, Elizabeth, having thrown her little wallet on her shoulder, walked a few steps hastily forward.

* Copeck or copec, a small piece of Russian money, worth somewhat more than an English farthing. A hundred copecks are a ruble, and a ruble is equivalent to two shillings and two-pence, English money.

But, turning her head once again towards the dwelling she had abandoned, her sobs almost stifled her. Bathed in tears she rushed back to the door of the apartment in which her parents slept; "Oh Heaven!" cried she, "watch over them, guard them, preserve them, and grant that I may never pass this threshold again if I am destined to behold them no more." She then rose, and turning, beheld her father standing behind her. "Oh my father! are you here? why did you come?"—"To see you, to embrace you, to bless you once more; to say to you, my Elizabeth, if, during the days of your childhood, I have let one day escape, without showing proofs of my tenderness, if once I have made your tears to flow, if a look, an expression of harshness has afflicted your heart, before you go, pardon me for it; pardon your father, that, if he is doomed not to have the happiness of seeing you again, he may die in peace."—"Oh! do not talk thus," interrupted Elizabeth—"And your poor mother," continued he, "when she awakes, what shall I say to her? what shall I answer when she asks me for her child? She will seek you in the forest, on the borders of the lake, every where; and I shall

follow weeping with her, and calling despondingly for our child, who will no longer hear us." At these words, Elizabeth, overpowered and almost fainting, supported herself against the walls of the hut. Her father, seeing that he had affected her beyond her strength, bitterly reproached himself for his own want of fortitude. "My child," said he, in a more composed voice, "take courage; I will promise, if not to comfort your mother, at least to encourage her to support your absence with fortitude, and will restore her to you when you return hither. Yes, my child, whether the enterprise of your filial piety be crowned with success or not, your parents will not die till they have embraced you again." He then addressed the missionary, who, with his eyes cast down, stood at a little distance, deeply affected by this scene of affliction: "Father," said Springer, "I entrust, to your care, a jewel which is invaluable. It is more precious than my heart's blood; far, far more precious than my life. Nevertheless, with full confidence I entrust it to you. Depart then together; and may the angels of Heaven watch over both. To guard her celestial powers will arm themselves,

and that dust which formed the mortal part of her ancestors will be reanimated ; the all-powerful Being, the Father and Protector of my Elizabeth will not suffer her to perish."

Without venturing to look at her father again, Elizabeth placed one hand across her eyes, and, giving the other to the missionary, departed with him. The morning's dawn now began to illuminate the summits of the mountains and gild the tops of the dark firs; but all nature was still wrapped in profound silence. No breath of wind ruffled the smooth surface of the lake, nor agitated, with its breezes, the leaves of the trees. The birds had not begun to sing, nor did a sound escape even from the smallest insect. It seemed as if nature preserved a respectful silence, that the voice of a father, calling down benedictions on his child, might penetrate through the forest which now divided them.

I have attempted to convey an idea of the grief of the father, but my powers are inadequate to describe that of the mother. How could I delineate her sensations, when, awakened by the lamentations of her husband, she runs to him, and reading, in his desponding attitude, that she had lost her child, falls

to the ground in a state of unutterable anguish, that seems to threaten her existence. In vain does Springer, by recalling to her mind all the miseries attendant upon a life of banishment, endeavour to calm her grief. She attends not to his voice: love itself has lost its influence, and can no longer reach her heart. The sorrows of a mother are beyond all human consolation, and can receive it from no earthly source. Heaven reserves to itself alone the power of soothing them; and if these agonizing sorrows are given to the weaker sex, that sex is formed gentle and submissive, to bow beneath the hand that chastises it, and to have recourse to the only comfort that remains.

VIII.

IT was on the eighteenth of May that Elizabeth and her guide set out upon their journey. They were full a month in crossing the marshy forests of Siberia, which, at this season of the year, are subject to terrible inundations. Sometimes the peasants, whom they overtook, permitted them, for a

trifling compensation, to mount their sledges; at night they took shelter in cabins so miserable that, had not Elizabeth been long inured to hardships and privation, she would scarcely have been able to take any repose.

Often was she obliged to lie down, in her clothes, upon a wretched mattress, in a room scented with the fumes of tobacco and spirits, and into which the wind penetrated through the broken windows, ill repaired with paper; and, to complete her discomfort, the whole family, and sometimes even a part of their cattle, reposed in the same miserable apartment.

Forty versts from Tinoen,* a town on the frontiers of Siberia, is a wood, in which a row of posts mark the boundary of the division of Tobolsk. Elizabeth observed them, and, to her, it appeared like a second parting, to leave the territory which her parents inhabited. "Alas!" said she, "what a distance separates us now!" When she entered Europe, the same melancholy reflection re-

* Tinoen, Tiumen, or Tioumen, is the first town in Siberia on entering the government of Tobolsk from European Russia. It is situated in the province of Tobolsk, and on the banks of the river Tura. In the vicinity of this town foxes are taken, whose skins are held in such estimation, that they are all sent to the court of Russia.

curred to her. To be in a different quarter of the world presented to her imagination the idea of a distance more immense than the vast extent of country she had crossed. In Asia she had left the only human beings upon whom she had a claim, and upon whose affection she could rely; and, what could she expect to find in that Europe so celebrated for its enlightened inhabitants? what in that imperial court, where riches and talents flowed in such abundance? Would she find in it any heart moved by her sufferings, softened by her afflictions, or from whose commiseration she might hope for protection? At this thought, one name presented itself to her mind. Ah! might she have dared to indulge the hope of meeting him at Petersburg—*but there was no chance.* The mandate of the Emperor had sent him to join the army in Livonia.* There was not, then, the remotest probability of finding him in Europe; a quarter of the globe which seemed to her to be inhabited by him only, because he was the only person

* Livonia is one of the four great provinces of European Russia, situated on the shores of the Baltic, which Peter the Great wrested from Sweden in 1702. Its capital is Riga.

in it whom she knew. All her dependence then was upon Father Paul; and, in Elizabeth's ideas, the man who had passed sixty years in rendering services to his fellow-creatures must have great influence at the court of monarchs.

Perma* is nearly nine hundred versts from Tobolsk. The roads are good, the lands fertile and well cultivated. Young woods of birch trees are frequently intermixed with fine and extensive fields; and opulent villages, belonging to the Russians and Tartars, are scattered about. Their inhabitants appeared to be so contented and happy that it could hardly be imagined they breathed the air of Siberia. This tract of country contains even elegant inns, abounding in luxuries hitherto unknown to Elizabeth, and which excited her astonishment.

The city of Perma, although the handsomest she had hitherto seen, shocked her from the narrowness and dirtiness of the streets, the height of its buildings, the con-

* Perma, or Permski, is a considerable, but ill-built town of Asiatic Russia, on the river Kama, between the Dwina and the Oby, six hundred versts from Kasan. It is the residence of a governor, and the capital of a government, which bears the same name.

fused intermixture of fine houses and miserable huts, and the closeness of the air. The town is surrounded by fens, and the country as far as Casan* (interspersed with barren heaths and forests of firs) exhibits a most gloomy aspect. In stormy seasons the lightning frequently falls upon these aged trees, which burn with rapidity, and appear like columns of the brightest red, surmounted by crowns of flames. Elizabeth and her guide, often witnesses of these flaming spectacles, were not unfrequently obliged to cross woods that were burning on each side of them. Sometimes they saw trees consumed at the roots, while their tops, which the fire had not reached, were supported only by the bark, or, half thrown down, formed an arch across the road. Others falling, with a tremendous crash one upon another, make a pyramid of flames like the

* Kasan, or Casan, a considerable town of Asiatic Russia, the capital of the province or government of the same name, is situated on the river Casanska, at no great distance from the Wolga, in latitude 55° 44' north. It was formerly the capital of a Tartar kingdom of the same name, which the Russians took in 1554. Its suburbs extend three versts from the city. A very valuable kind of morocco leather is manufactured here, and it also carries on an extensive trade in skins.

piles of the ancients, on which pagan piety consumed the ashes of its heroes.

Amidst these dangers, and amidst the still more imminent ones which they encountered in the passage of rivers that had overflowed their banks, Elizabeth was never disheartened. She even thought that the difficulties of her undertaking had been exaggerated. The weather, it is true, was uncommonly fine, and she often travelled in the cars or kibitkis,* which were returning from Siberia, whither they had conveyed new exiles. For a few copecs, the travellers easily obtained permission of the drivers to ride as far as they went. Elizabeth, whenever she had need of it, accepted, without hesitation, the assistance of her holy guide; for what she received from him was considered by her as the gift of Heaven.

Elizabeth and her guide, about the beginning of September, arrived at the banks of the Thama,† two hundred versts from Ca-

* The Kibitki is a light travelling carriage, much used in Russia, and long enough for travellers to lie down in it at full length.

† The Thama, or Kama, is a considerable river of Asiatic Russia, which, after a long course, falls into the Wolga in the government of Kasan. It is very broad, and flows with great rapidity.

san ; having nearly accomplished half their journey. Had it been the will of Heaven that she should complete her enterprise as easily as she had succeeded in this part of her journey, she would have considered the happiness of her parents cheaply purchased. But it was her destiny to experience a sad reverse; and, with the winter season, that period approached which was to put her steadfastness to the severest trial, and call forth all the exertions of her filial piety, to gain for its reward a crown of immortal glory.

The health of the missionary had, for several days, visibly declined. It was with difficulty that he could walk, even with the assistance of Elizabeth, and supported by his staff. He was frequently obliged to rest; and, when a conveyance could be obtained for him in a kibitki, the violent shocks he received, from the roughness of the road, exhausted the little remains of his strength, though the firm composure of his soul continued unmoved. On his arrival at Sarapol (a large village on the northern banks of the Thama), he found himself so extremely weak, that it was impossible for him to think of proceeding on his journey.

At this place he obtained a lodging in a miserable inn, adjoining to the house of the superintendent of the district. But the only room he could be accommodated with, was a sort of loft or garret, the floor of which shook under every step. The windows were unglazed, and the furniture of this wretched apartment consisted of a wooden table and a bedstead. Over the latter were strewed a few trusses of straw, upon which the missionary reposed his feeble limbs. The wind, which entered freely through the broken casements, must have banished sleep from his relief, had the pain he unremittingly endured allowed him to enjoy any repose. The most desponding reflections now presented themselves to the terrified imagination of Elizabeth. She inquired for a physician, but none was to be had; and, as she perceived that the people of the house took no interest whatever in the state of the sufferer, she was obliged to depend solely upon her own efforts for procuring him relief. After fastening some pieces of the old tapestry, which lined the sides of the apartment, across the windows, she went out into the fields, in search of certain wild herbs, the virtues of which she had been

taught by her mother: and of which she made a salutary beverage for the suffering missionary.

As night approached, the symptoms of his malady grew, every instant, more alarming, and the unfortunate Elizabeth could no longer restrain her tears. She withdrew to a distance, that her sobs might not disturb his dying moments; but the good father heard them, and was grieved for an affliction which he knew not how to remove; for he felt well assured that he should rise no more, and that the period of his mortal career was fast approaching. To the pious philanthropist, who had dedicated a long life to the service of his God and of his fellow-creatures, death could present no terrors, though he could not help regretting the prospect of being called away while there remained so much for him to do: "Oh Most High!" he inwardly exclaimed, "I presume not to murmur at thy decrees; but, had it been thy will to spare me till I had conducted this unprotected orphan to the end of her journey, my death would have been more easy."

When it grew dark, Elizabeth lighted a rosin taper, and remained seated all night at the foot of the bed to attend her patient.

A little before daybreak, she approached to give him some drink. The missionary, feeling that the moment of his dissolution was near at hand, lifted himself up a little in the bed, and receiving from her the cup she presented to him, raised it towards Heaven, saying, "Oh, my God! I recommend her to thy care, who hast promised that a cup of cold water bestowed in thy name shall not go unrewarded." These words carried with them the conviction of that misfortune which Elizabeth, till this moment, had affected to disbelieve. She discovered that the missionary felt his end approaching, and that she should soon be left destitute and unprotected. Her courage failed. She fell upon her knees by the side of the bed, while her eyes became dim, her respiration difficult, and a cold dew stood upon her forehead. "My God! look down with pity on her! look down with pity on her, oh my God!" repeated the missionary, while he regarded her with the tenderest commiseration; but as he perceived that the violence of her anguish seemed to increase, he said, "My dear child, in the name of God and of your parents, compose yourself, and listen to me." The trembling Elizabeth stifled her sobs, and, wiping away the tears

that impeded her sight, raised her eyes to her venerable guide in token of attention. He supported himself against the back of the bed, and, exerting all his remaining strength, addressed her thus:—"My child, in travelling at your age, alone, unprotected, and during the severe season that approaches, you will have to endure great hardships. But there are dangers still more alarming, which must fall to your lot. An ordinary courage, that might stand firm amidst fatigues and suffering, would be unable to resist the enticements of seduction. But yours, Elizabeth, is not an ordinary courage; and, under the protection of Heaven, the allurements of a court will not have the power to change your heart. You will meet with many, who, presuming upon your unprotected situation and on your distress, will seek to turn you from the paths of virtue; but you will neither put faith in their promises, nor be dazzled by the splendour which may surround them. The fear of God, and the love of your parents, will place you beyond all their attempts. To whatever extremity you may be reduced, never lose sight of these sacred claims never forget that a single false step will precipitate to the grave those to whom you owe your

existence."——"Oh, father!" interrupted she, "fear not."——"I do not fear," said he, "your piety, your noble resolution have merited implicit confidence, and I am well convinced that you will not sink under the trials to which Heaven ordains you. You will find, my child, in my cloak, the purse which the generous governor of Tobolsk gave to me, when he recommended you to my care. Preserve, with the strictest caution, the secret of his agency in appointing me to conduct you. His life depends upon your circumspection. The money this purse contains will defray your expenses to Petersburg. When you arrive there, go to the Patriarch; mention Father Paul to him. Perhaps the name may not have escaped his memory; he will procure an asylum for you in some convent, and will, I doubt not, present your petition to the Emperor; and it is impossible that the Emperor can reject it. In my expiring moments, I repeat it to you, my child, that a proof of filial piety, like that which you will display, has no precedent. The admiring world will bestow the applause it merits, and your virtue will be rewarded upon earth, before it receives the glorious recompense which awaits it in Heaven——"

He ceased; his breath began to fail, and the chilly damps of death already stood upon his brow. Elizabeth, reclining her head against the bed, wept unconstrained. After a long interval of silence, the missionary, untying a little ebony crucifix, which hung suspended from his neck, presented it to her, saying, in feeble accents, "Take this, my child, it is the only treasure I have to bestow, the only one I possess on earth; and possessed of that, I wanted not." She pressed it to her lips with the most lively transports of grief; for the renunciation of such a treasure proved that the missionary was certain the moment of his dissolution was at hand. "Fear nothing," added he, with the tenderest compassion: "the good Pastor, who abandons not one of his flock, will watch over and protect you; and, if he deprive you of your present support, he will not fail to bestow more than he takes from you. Confide securely in his goodness. He who feeds the sparrows, and knows the number of the sands upon the sea-shore, will not forget Elizabeth."—"Father, O father!" she exclaimed, seizing the hand he held out to her: "I cannot resign myself to lose thee."—"Child," replied he, "Heaven

ordains it. Submit with patience to its decrees; in a few moments I shall be on high, when I will pray for you and for your parents——” He could not finish; his lips moved, but the sounds he sought to utter died away. He fell back upon his bed, and, raising his eyes to Heaven, exerted his last efforts to recommend, to its protection, the destitute orphan, for whom he still seemed to supplicate when life had fled. So deeply was the force of benevolence implanted in his soul, so habitually, during the course of his long life, had he neglected his own interests to devote himself to those of others, that, at the very moment when he was to enter into the awful abyss of eternity, and to appear before the throne of his sovereign Judge, to receive the irrevocable doom—— he thought not of himself.

The cries of Elizabeth induced several persons to hasten into the apartment. They demanded the cause, and she pointed to her protector extended lifeless on the straw. The rumour of the event immediately gathered a crowd around the corpse. Some, who were attracted by idle curiosity, regarded the youthful mourner with astonishment, as she stood weeping near the deceased. Others

compassionated her distress; but the people of the house, anxious to receive payment for the miserable accommodation they had afforded, discovered, with delight, the contents of the missionary's cloak, which, in her grief, Elizabeth had not thought of securing. They took possession of the purse, and told her that they would restore to her what remained when they had reimbursed themselves, and paid the expenses of the funeral.

Soon afterwards the Popes* arrived, followed by attendants with torches. They threw a pall over the deceased; and the unfortunate Elizabeth, obliged to let go the cold hand of her lifeless protector, which, hitherto, she had not relinquished, gave a scream of anguish, as she took a last view of his venerable countenance. She threw herself on her knees in the most obscure part of the chamber, and there, bathed in tears, and covering her face with a handkerchief, as if to shut out from her sight that

* Pope is a Greek name, which signifies father. It is an appellation given to all the ministers of the Greek church. These pious personages are dressed after the manner of the East, and though generally possessing little information are much to be commended for their spirit of toleration to every other profession of faith.

desolate world in which she was now to wander alone, exclaimed in a voice of stifled agony, "Oh! thou blessed spirit, who now art reaping the reward of thy virtue, in realms of happiness, abandon not the destitute being who still looks to thee for succour! Oh, my father! Oh, my mother! where are you at this moment, that your child is bereft of all human aid?"

The attendants now began to chant the funeral hymns; and placed the body on the bier. When the instant for its removal arrived, Elizabeth, though weak, agitated, and trembling, determined to attend, to their last asylum, the remains of him who had guided and protected her, and who, when expiring, had prayed for her welfare.

IX.

ON the right bank of the Thama, and at the foot of an eminence on which stand the ruins of a fortress constructed during the remote period of the commotions of the Baschkirs,* is a place set apart as a burial-ground

* The Baschkirs, or Bashkirs, are a colony of Asiatic

for the inhabitants of Sarapol. This spot is at a little distance from the town; it is enclosed by a low hedge, and in the centre is a small wooden building which serves for an oratory, and around which heaps of earth, surmounted by a cross, mark the different receptacles of the dead. Here and there a few straggling firs extend their gloomy shade; and, from beneath the sepulchral stones, grow large clusters of thistles with wide spreading leaves and blue flowers; and another weed, of which the flowers of livid yellow seem formed to blossom only over the ashes of the dead. -4

The train that followed the coffin of the missionary was very numerous. It consisted of people of various nations, Persians, Turkomans,* and Arabians, who had made their escape from the Kirguis, and had been received into colleges founded by Catharins

Russia, who derive their origin partly from the Nogayan Tartars, and partly from the Bulgarians. They dwell principally in Siberia, on the banks of the Wolga and the Ural. In 1770, it was calculated that 27,000 families of them were settled in the governments of Ufa and Perma. In summer they live in tents near their flocks, and in winter in miserable huts. Their religion is Mohammedan: but they are very superstitious, and believe in witchcraft and incantations.

* The Turkomans are a Tartar people, who inhabit the borders of the Caspian Sea

the Second. With lighted tapers in their hands, they accompanied the funeral procession, blending their voices with those of the mourners, while Elizabeth, following slowly and in silence, her face covered with a veil, appeared as chief mourner, feeling no connection, in the midst of this tumultuous crowd, but with him who was no more.

When the coffin was let down into the grave, the Pope, who officiated according to the rites of the Greek church, put a small piece of money into the hand of the deceased to pay his passage to the celestial regions. He then threw over the body a few shovelful of earth, and departed. Thus was consigned to oblivion the man who had never suffered a day to elapse without rendering services to his fellow-creatures; like the beneficent wind, which scatters wide the grains of the earth, and thus produces plenty all around. He had travelled over more than half the world, sowing the seeds of wisdom and of truth, and by that world he died forgotten. So little is fame attached to modest merit; and so little of it do men bestow, except on those who dazzle them, or on those conquerors who glory in destroying the human race to gratify their ambition. Vain

worldly glory! fruitless honours! Heaven would not permit you to be thus the reward of human grandeur only, had it not reserved its own celestial glory for the recompense of virtue.

Elizabeth remained in the burying-ground until the close of day. She wept in solitude, and offered up her supplications to the Almighty, which greatly relieved her bursting heart. In afflictions like hers, a meditation between Heaven and the grave is salutary. A reflection on death will rouse our drooping spirits; a contemplation on the joys of Heaven will excite hope and consolation. Where a misfortune is beheld in its extent, the horror we have conceived of it decreases; and where such a compensation is presented, the evil annexed to it loses its weight.

Elizabeth wept, but she did not repine. She thanked God for the blessings with which the hardships of half her journey had been lessened, and did not feel that she was now entitled to complain because it was the will of Heaven to withdraw them. Bereft of her guide, of every human succour, her courage still sustained her, and the undaunted heroism of her soul was proof against despair. "My dear father, my tender mother," she ex-

claimed, "fear not; your child will not sink under the trials that await her." Thus did she address her parents in the language of encouragement, as if they had been witnesses of her destitute situation; and when secret terror, in spite of herself, stole in upon her soul, she would again invoke their names, and, in repeating them, her fears were dispelled. "Oh, holy and now happy spirit," said she, bending her head to the newly removed earth, "art thou then lost to us, before my beloved parents could express their gratitude, and could invoke blessings on the kind protector of their child!"

When night had begun to obscure the horizon, and Elizabeth was obliged to quit this melancholy spot, desirous to leave some memorial behind her, she took a sharp flint, and inscribed these words upon the cross which was erected over the grave: "*The just perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart.*"* Then, bidding a final adieu to the remains of her protector, she left the burying-ground, and returned sorrowfully to her lonely apartment in the inn at Sarapol, in which she had so dismally spent the preceding night.

* Isaiah, chap. 57, verse 1.

On the ensuing morning, when she was about to proceed on her journey, the host gave her three rubles,* assuring her that it was all which remained in the missionary's purse. Elizabeth received them with emotions of gratitude and veneration, as if these riches, which she owed to her protector, had been sent from that Heaven of which he was now an inhabitant. "Yes," exclaimed she, "my guide, and my protector, your charity survives you; and, though you are taken from me, it is that which supports me still."

During her solitary route, her tears frequently flowed. Every object excited a bitter recollection of the friend she had lost. If a peasant, or an inquisitive traveller regarded her with impertinent curiosity, or interrogated her in accents of rudeness, she missed the venerable protector who had insured respect. If, oppressed by weariness, she was obliged to seat herself near the road to rest, she dared not stop the empty sledge that passed, fearing a refusal, accompanied perhaps by insult. Besides, as she possessed but three rubles, she carefully preserved that

* The ruble is a Russian coin, equivalent to two shillings and two-pence sterling, English.

pittance to delay the period when she must have recourse to accidental charity. Thus was she debarred from various little indulgencies which the good missionary had often procured for her. She always selected the meanest habitation as that in which she asked shelter, contenting herself with the most wretched accommodations and the coarsest food.

She travelled so slowly that she was unable to reach Casan, till the beginning of October. A strong wind, from the north-west, had prevailed for several days, and had collected so great a quantity of ice upon the Wolga,* as to render the passage of that river almost impracticable. It could only be crossed by going partly in a boat, and

* The Volga or Wolga, is one of the most celebrated rivers of Europe, called by the Tartars, Idel, Adel, or Edel. It rises in the mountains of the government of Tuer, which it waters, as well as the governments of Yaroslaf, Kostroma, Nishney, Novogorod, Kasan, Simurisk, Saratof, and Caucasus, and falls into the Caspian Sea near Astracan, after being divided into seventy branches which form several islands. Its course is nearly four thousand versts in length. Seleucus Nicanor, after him Selim II., and lastly Peter the Great, had the idea of digging a canal of communication between the Don and the Wolga in order to be able to pass from the Baltic and the Caspian to the Euxine Sea. This river abounds in fish.

partly on foot, leaping from one piece of ice to another. Even the boatmen, who were accustomed to this dangerous navigation, would not undertake it but in consideration of a high reward; and no passenger ever ventured to expose his life with them in the attempt. Elizabeth, without thinking of the danger, was about to enter one of their boats; they roughly pushed her away, declaring that she could not be permitted to cross till the river was quite frozen over. She inquired how long she would probably have to wait. "A fortnight, at least," they replied. This determined her immediately to proceed. "I beseech you, in the name of Heaven I beseech you," she exclaimed, "aid me in crossing the river. I come from beyond Tobolsk, and am going to Petersburg, to petition the Emperor in behalf of my father, who is now an exile in Siberia; and I have so little money that, if I am obliged to remain a fortnight at Casan, I shall have nothing left for the rest of my journey."

This affecting appeal softened the heart of one of the boatmen, who, taking her by the hand, "Come," said he, "you are a good girl; I will endeavour to ferry you over: the fear of God, and the love of your parents,

guide your steps, and Heaven will protect you." He then took her into his boat, which he rowed half way over: not being able to work it farther, he lifted Elizabeth on his shoulder; and, alternately walking and leaping over the masses of ice, he reached, by the assistance of an oar, the opposite bank of the Wolga, where he set her down in safety. Elizabeth expressed her acknowledgments of the kindness in the most animated terms that her grateful heart could dictate, and, taking out her purse, which contained now but two rubles and a few smaller coins, offered a trifling reward for his services. "Poor child!" said the boatman, looking at the contents of her purse, "is that all the money you have to defray the expenses of your journey hence to Petersburg? Believe me that Nicholas Kisloff will not deprive you of a single obol! No, rather let me add to your little store; it will bring down a blessing upon me and my children." He then threw her a small piece of money, and returned to his boat, exclaiming, "May God watch over and protect you, my child!"

Elizabeth took up the money, and regarding it with her eyes filled with tears, said,

"I will preserve thee for my father; thou wilt prove to him that his prayers have been heard, and that a paternal protection has, every where, been extended to me."

The atmosphere was clear, and the sky serene, but the keen breezes of a northerly wind chilled the air. After having walked for four hours without stopping, Elizabeth's strength began to fail. No human habitation presented itself to her view, and she sought shelter at the foot of a hill, the rocky summit of which, jutting over, defended her from the wind. Near this hill was an extensive forest of oaks; trees which are not to be seen on the Asiatic side of the Wolga. Elizabeth knew not what they were. They had lost some of their foliage, yet their beauty was not so much diminished, but it might still have excited admiration, had she been able to view these European productions with pleasure. They, however, recalled too forcibly to her mind the immense distance which separated her from her parents: she preferred the fir, which solaced that spot where she had been reared; which had so frequently yielded shade to the days of her childhood, and under which, perhaps, her beloved parents at that instant reposed

These and similar reflections always brought tears into her eyes: "Oh! when shall I be again blessed with beholding them!"—she exclaimed; "when shall I again hear the sound of their voices; when again return to their fond embraces?" As she spoke, she stretched her arms towards Casan, the buildings of which were still perceptible in the distant prospect; and, above the town, the ancient fortress of the Chams of Tartary* presented, from the summit of the rocks, a view grand and picturesque.

In the course of her journey Elizabeth often met with objects which affected her compassionate heart in a degree scarcely inferior to that of her own distress. Sometimes she encountered wretches chained together, who were condemned to work for life in the mines of Nertchinsk,† or to inhabit the dreary

* The Chams of Tartary were sovereign princes: but the title of Cham is given generally to all the superior officers, governors of towns or provinces, among the Tartars, and other people of the East.

† Nertchinsk is a small town of Siberia to the south-east of Tobolsk, famous for its silver mines, which are worked for the crown by malefactors and other exiles condemned to these labours. It is situated on the little river Nertchu, which flows into the Amoor in the midst of that chain of mountains called the Nertchinskoi Mountains, which contain all sorts of mineral productions in abundance.

coasts of Angara.* At others, she saw troops of emigrants, who were destined to people the new city, which was building, by the Emperor's order, on the confines of China; some on foot, and others on the cars which conveyed the animals, poultry, and baggage. Notwithstanding these were criminals, who had been sentenced to a milder doom, for offences which might justly have been punished with death, they did not fail to excite compassion in Elizabeth. But when she met exiles escorted by an officer of state; persons whose noble mien called to her recollection the condition of her father, she could not forbear shedding tears at their fate. Sometimes she ventured respectfully to approach, for the purpose of offering consolation. Pity, however, was the only gift that she had to bestow. With that she soothed the sorrows of many whom she met, and, by a return of pity, must she now herself depend for subsistence; for on her arrival at Volodimir,† she had but one ruble left. She had occu

* The Angara is a small river of Siberia, which rises in the mountains of Baikal, and waters the government of Irkutsk.

† Volodimir or Vladimir, a town and duchy of great Russia, the capital of the government of the same name.

pied nearly three months in her journey from Sarapol to Volodimir; but, through the kind hospitality of the Russian peasants, who never take any payment for milk and bread, her little treasure had not been yet exhausted. Now, however, all began to fail; her feet were almost bare, and her ragged dress ill defended her from a frigidity of atmosphere, which had already sunk the thermometer thirty degrees below the freezing point, and which increased daily. The ground was covered with snow more than two feet deep. Sometimes it congealed while falling, and appeared like a shower of ice, so thick that the earth and sky were equally concealed from view. At other times torrents of rain rendered the roads almost impassable, or gusts of wind so violent arose, that Elizabeth, to defend herself from its rude assaults, was obliged to dig holes in the snow, covering her head with large pieces of the bark of pine trees, which she dexterously stripped off, as she had seen done by the inhabitants of Siberia.

One of these tempestuous hurricanes had raised the snow in thick clouds, and had created an obscurity so impenetrable that Elizabeth, no longer able to discern the road,

and stumbling at every step, was obliged to stop. She took refuge under a lofty rock, to which she clung as firmly as she could, that she might be enabled to withstand the fury of a storm which overthrew all around her. Whilst she was in this perilous situation, with her head bent down, a confused noise, that appeared to issue from behind the spot where she stood, raised a hope that a better shelter might be procured. With difficulty she tottered round the rock, and discovered a kibitki, which had been overturned and broken, and a hut at no great distance. She hastened to demand entrance. An old woman opened the door; and struck with the wretchedness of her appearance, "My poor child," said she, "whence dost thou come, and why art thou wandering thus alone in this dreadful weather?" To this interrogation Elizabeth made her usual reply: "I come from beyond Tobolsk, and am going to Petersburg to solicit my father's pardon." At these words, a man who was sitting, dejectedly, in a corner of the room, suddenly raised his head from between his hands, and regarding Elizabeth with an air of astonishment, exclaimed, "Is it possible that you come from so remote a country, alone, in this

state of distress, and during this tempestuous season, to solicit pardon for your father?—Alas! my poor child would perhaps have done as much, had not the barbarians tore me from her arms, leaving her in ignorance of my fate. She knows not what is become of me. She cannot plead for mercy. No, never shall I again behold her—this afflicting thought will kill me—separated for ever from my child, I cannot live. Now, indeed, that I know my doom,” continued the unhappy father, “I might inform her of it; I have written a letter to her, but the carrier belonging to this kibitki, who is returning to Riga,* the place of her abode, will not undertake the charge of it without some small compensation, and I am unable to offer him any. Not a single copeck do I possess: the barbarians have stripped me of every thing.”

Elizabeth drew from her pocket the last ruble she possessed, and, blushing deeply at the insignificance of the trifle, asked, in timid accents, as she presented it to the unfortu-

* Riga is the capital of Livonia, and of a government of the same name. It was a Hanse Town, of which the Russians seized possession in 1710, and it has belonged to them from that period. Its situation on the Baltic, at the mouth of the Dwina, renders it very commercial. North latitude 57°, east longitude 24°.

nate exile, "If that would be enough?" He pressed to his lips the generous hand that was held forth to succour him; and then ran to offer the money to the carrier. As with the widow's mite, Heaven bestowed its blessing on the offering. The carrier was satisfied, and took charge of the letter. Thus did her noble sacrifice produce a fruit worthy of the heart of Elizabeth: it relieved the agonized feelings of a parent, and carried consolation to the wounded bosom of a child.

X.

WHEN the storm had abated, Elizabeth, before she pursued her journey, embraced the old woman, who had bestowed upon her all the care and tenderness of a mother; and said in a low voice, that she might not be heard by the exile, "I have nothing left to give: the blessing of my parents is the only recompense I have to offer for your kindness; it is the only treasure I possess."—"How!" interrupted the old woman aloud, "My poor child, have you

When given away all you possessed?" Elizabeth blushed, and hung down her head. The exile started from his seat, and, raising his hands to Heaven, threw himself upon his knees before her. "Angel that thou art," he exclaimed, "can I make no return to you, who have thus bestowed your all upon me?" A knife lay upon the table: Elizabeth took it up, cut off a lock of her hair, and said, "Sir, you are going into Siberia, and will see the Governor of Tobolsk; give him this, I beseech you, and tell him, that Elizabeth sends it to her parents. He will perhaps consent to forward it to them as a token by which they may know that their daughter is still in existence."—"Your wish shall be accomplished," answered the exile, "and if, in those deserts of which I am to be an inhabitant, I am not absolutely a slave, I will seek out the dwelling of your parents, and will tell them what you have this day done for me."

To the heart of Elizabeth, the gift of a throne would have afforded less delight, than the prospect of thus being able to convey consolation to her parents. She was now bereft of all, except the little piece of money given to her by the boatman of the Wolga. Yet

she might deem herself rich, for she had just tasted the only pleasure which opulence could bestow: she had conferred happiness on a fellow creature, had revived the desponding heart of a father, and had converted tears of sadness, shed by the orphan, into those of consolation. Such were the blessings which even a single ruble had effected.

From Volodimir to the village of Pokroff the road lies through a marshy flat, covered with extensive forests of oaks, elms, aspens, and wild apple-trees. In summer these different trees form so many groves which delight the eye; and they afford an asylum to numerous banditti. In winter, as the boughs, despoiled of their foliage, do not afford so easy a concealment, these bands of robbers are less formidable. Elizabeth, however, during her journey, heard numerous accounts of robberies that had been committed. Had she carried with her valuable property, such accounts might have been to her a source of terror; but, obliged to beg her daily bread, poverty was her passport; and the protection of Heaven enabled her to traverse the forests in safety.

A few versts from Pokroff the high road

had been torn up by a hurricane, and travellers proceeding to Moscow* were obliged to make a considerable circuit through swamps occasioned by the inundations of the Wolga. These, however, were now hardened, by the frost, to a solidity equal to that of dry land. Elizabeth attempted to follow the route which had been pointed out to her; but, after walking, for more than an hour, over this icy desert, through which were no traces of a road, she found herself in a swampy marsh, from which every endeavour to extricate herself was, for a long time, exerted in vain. At length, with great difficulty,

* Moscow, or Moskva, formerly the capital of Russia before Peter the Great had built St. Petersburg, and now the capital of the government of the same name, is one of the most considerable cities of Europe. The Earl of Carlisle, ambassador from the court of London to Moscow, in the reign of Charles II., gives it a circumference of twelve English miles. Voltaire and Coxe enlarge this circumference to twenty miles, and state that the number of its inhabitants in 1792 amounted to 328,000 souls. But the magnificence of the buildings by no means correspond to the size of this vast enclosure. The handsomest edifices are the cathedral, the imperial palace, and the foundling hospital, instituted by Catharine II. By the side of the most superb palaces stand wretched wooden houses and miserable hovels; which made the Prince de Ligne say, that Moscow appeared as if the castles of four or five hundred noblemen, with their respective villages, had been drawn there upon wheels, and sctered into an agreement to live together.

she attained a little hillock. Covered with mud, and exhausted by fatigue, she seated herself upon a stone to rest, and took off her sandals to dry them in the sun, which at that moment shone in full lustre. The environs of this spot appeared to be perfectly desolate: no signs of a human dwelling were visible; solitude and silence prevailed around. Elizabeth now discovered that she must have strayed far from the road, and, notwithstanding all the courage with which she was endowed, her heart failed. Her situation was alarming in the extreme; behind was the bog she had just crossed, and before her an immense forest through which no track was to be distinguished.

At length day began to close; and, notwithstanding her extreme weariness, she was obliged to proceed in search of a shelter for the night, or of some person who might have the humanity to procure her one. In vain did she wander about, sometimes following one track, and sometimes another. No object presented itself to revive her hopes, no sound reanimated her drooping spirits; that of a human voice would have filled her heart with transport. Suddenly she heard the voices of several persons, and, immediately after-

wards, saw some men issue from the forest. Elate with hope, she hastened towards them; but, as they drew near, terror again succeeded to joy. Their savage air and stern countenances dismayed her more than the horrors of the solitude in which she had so lately been plunged. All the stories she had heard of banditti immediately rushed upon her imagination; she feared lest a judgment awaited her for the temerity with which she had indulged the idea that a special Providence watched over her preservation; and she fell upon her knees to humble herself in the presence of divine mercy. The troop advanced; stopped before Elizabeth, and, regarding her with surprise and curiosity, demanded whence she came, and what circumstance had brought her there. With downcast eyes, and a trembling voice, she replied, that she had come from beyond Tobolsk, and that she was going to Petersburg, to solicit from the Emperor a pardon for her father. She added, that, having lost her road, she had nearly perished in the marshes; and that she was waiting until she had regained a little strength, to go in search of an asylum. The men were astonished; they questioned her again, and asked her

what money she had to enable her to undertake so long a journey. She drew from her bosom the little coin given to her by the boatman of the Wolga. "Is that all?" they inquired. "It is all," she replied. At this answer, delivered with a candour that enforced belief, the robbers looked at each other with amazement. They were not moved: they were not softened. Rendered callous by long habits of vice, an action of such noble heroism as that of Elizabeth had no such influence over their souls; but it excited wonder. They could not comprehend what they felt necessitated to believe; and, restrained by a kind of veneration, they dared not harm the object of Heaven's evident protection: so passing on, they said to each other, "Let us leave her; some supernatural Power protects her."

Elizabeth rose and hastened from them. She had not penetrated far into the forest before four roads, crossing each other, presented themselves to her view. In one of the angles which they formed was a little chapel, dedicated to the Virgin, and, over it, a direction-post inscribed with the names of the towns to which the different roads led. Elizabeth prostrated herself to offer her

grateful acknowledgments to the Omnipotent Being who had preserved her: the robbers were not mistaken, she was protected by a supernatural Power.

Hope had restored to Elizabeth all her strength, and she entered again on the road to Pokroff with her usual activity. She soon regained the Wolga, which forms an angle before this village, and flows past the walls of a convent of nuns. Elizabeth solicited shelter under its venerable roof. She related the hardships she had undergone, and disclosed to the community how much she stood in need of assistance. The nuns received her with so much cordiality, and lavished upon her such affectionate attentions, that their kind solicitude reminded her of those endearments which she had been accustomed to receive from her mother. The simple and modest recital that she gave of her adventures proved a source of edification to the whole community. Her pious auditors could not find words to express the admiration they felt at that heroic perseverance which had endured so many hardships, and had sustained so many severe trials without a murmur. They lamented their inability to assist her with money for the expenses

of her future journey ; but their convent was poor, had no revenue, and was supported by charity only. They could not, however, suffer their guest to depart in tattered garments, and nearly barefoot. To provide her with better habiliments they stripped themselves, and each gave to her a portion of her own clothing. Elizabeth endeavoured to decline the gifts : for it was of articles necessary to their own comfort that her generous benefactresses deprived themselves ; but, pointing to the walls of their convent, they said, " We have a shelter while you have none ; part of the little we possess belongs to you, for you are poorer still than we."

At length Elizabeth set forward on the last stage to Moscow. She was astonished at the extraordinary bustle she now witnessed ; at the immense concourse of carriages, carts, horses, and people of all ranks and ages, which was resorting to this great metropolis. As she passed onward the crowd seemed to augment. In a village where she stopped to rest, she found every house thronged with travellers, who paid so high a price even for the smallest lodging, that it was with the utmost difficulty the destitute Elizabeth could obtain even the meanest shelter. Alas ! how

many tears did she not shed, at receiving from the hand of scornful charity a little coarse food, and at being permitted to rest her weary limbs in a miserable shed, which scarcely defended her from the wind and snow: yet she was not humiliated; for she never forgot that God was the witness of her sufferings, and that the happiness of her parents was the end she had in view. Neither was she exalted; for she was too guileless to imagine that she did more than duty prescribed in devoting herself for their sake, and was too affectionate not to feel a secret satisfaction in suffering for them.

While immersed in thoughts like these, the bells of the village struck out; and from every side was resounded the name of Alexander, accompanied by loud acclamations of joy. The report of the cannon from Moscow quite alarmed her, for never before had she heard a sound so tremendous. In a timid voice she inquired the cause of these unusual sounds. "The Emperor is, no doubt, making his entrance into Moscow," said they.—"How!" exclaimed the astonished Elizabeth, "is not the Emperor then at Petersburg?" They shrugged their shoulders, with an air of pity for her ignorance, and replied, "Poor

girl! do you not know that the ceremony of Alexander's coronation must take place at Moscow?" Elizabeth clasped her hands in ecstasy. Heaven had again, in an especial manner, evinced itself in her favour; it had sent the monarch, upon whom the fate of her parents depended, to meet her on the way; and had ordained that she should arrive at that period of general joy, when the hearts of monarchs recede even from the dictates of justice, in favour of those of clemency. "Oh! my dear parents," she exclaimed, looking back towards the home from which so great a distance separated her, "must such delightful hopes rejoice my heart alone? and while your child is happy, must you grieve in ignorance of her fate?"

In the month of March, 1801, Elizabeth made her entrance into the immense capital of Muscovy,* imagining herself at the end of her labours, and not considering that there could be still a calamity to apprehend. On her progress through the city, superb edifices,

* Moscow was formerly the capital of the Russian Empire, and the residence of the Czars. Peter the Great constructed a canal which communicates from St. Petersburg to Moscow. This latter city, though of less consequence than formerly, is still very commercial. It is situated on the Moskwa. North latitude 55° 38', east longitude 39°.

decorated with all the magnificence of royalty, presented themselves to her admiring sight, but intermixed with wretched cabins, whose untiled roofs and broken casements afforded no shelter from the inclemency of the weather. The streets and alleys of Moscow were so thronged that Elizabeth could scarcely proceed through the crowds that obstructed the passage. After some time she found herself in meadows, richly planted, and began to imagine that she was again in the country. She stopped to rest in a grand avenue formed by rows of birch trees. An immense assemblage of well-dressed people thronged this avenue. All were conversing on the subject of the coronation. Trains of carriages passed rapidly backwards and forwards. The bells of the cathedral rang incessantly, and were answered by those of the smaller churches from all parts of the town. The sound of cannon, which were fired at regular intervals, could scarcely be distinguished amidst the overpowering tumult of this prodigious city. As Elizabeth entered the square of the Kremlin,* the

* The Kremlin is a vast quarter, almost in the centre of Moscow, containing the ancient imperial palace, the pleasure-house, the Emperor's stables, the palace which formerly

crowd appeared to increase at every step she took. She timidly approached one of the great fires which were lighted on this spot, and seated herself near it. Cold, weariness, and want of food had exhausted her spirits; and the joyful hopes of the morning were converted into sadness. She had wandered through the numerous streets of Moscow, but among the splendid habitations had beheld none that offered to her an asylum. She had met people of various nations and ranks, but had looked in vain for a friend or protector. Some had inquired their way, and expressed uneasiness at having missed it; how much did she envy them! "Happy," said she, "to have a home to seek; I, who possess none, cannot lose my way; for in every place is shelter equally denied to me."

belonged to the Patriarch, the cathedral, five convents, four churches, and the arsenal. All the churches of the Kremlin have superb bells, and are built in the Gothic style. The cathedral is ornamented with nine towers covered with copper.

XL

NIGHT now rapidly approached, and the cold became intense. The dejected Elizabeth had not eaten a morsel the whole day, and was nearly famished with hunger. She watched all who passed, to see whether she could discern, in their countenances, that expression of compassionate benevolence which might embolden her to make an appeal to their feelings. But, among the whole crowd, every individual of which she observed so earnestly, no one stood in need of her assistance; therefore, they had no interest in contemplating her woe-worn countenance. At last she ventured to solicit an entrance at the doors of some of the poorest dwellings, but met with rude repulse. The hope of gain, during this period of festivity, had steeled every heart against the importunities of distress. Never perhaps are mankind less inclined to liberality than at the moment of acquiring an increase of wealth.

Elizabeth returned to the fire in the square of the Kremlin. She wept in silence. Her heart was so much oppressed that she had

not even the strength to eat a morsel of bread which an old woman had given to her. She was now, for the first time, reduced to so great a degree of misery that she resolved to hold forth her hand to implore alms that might be bestowed with apathy, or refused with scorn. At the moment that she was about to try this last resource, an emotion of dignified pride restrained the hand she had presented. But the cold was excessive; and, in spending the night exposed to the open air, her life would be endangered, and that life she did not consider in her own disposal. This reflection overcame her pride; and, placing one hand across her eyes, she stretched out the other to the first person who passed: "In the name of the father whom you revere, of the mother whom you cherish, give to me," said she, "a trifle to procure a lodging for the night." The man whom she addressed surveyed her attentively by the light of the flame. "Young woman," he replied, "you have chosen a wretched trade; are you not able to work? At your age a livelihood may easily be obtained. God help you! I never encourage beggars." And he passed on.

The unfortunate Elizabeth raised her eyes to Heaven, as if to implore succour from thence; and, emboldened by a voice of consolation which then whispered in her heart, she ventured to repeat her appeal to the compassion of several other persons. Some passed without listening to her; others gave to her, but it was, in the whole, so little, that she could not collect enough to relieve her necessities. At last, when night was far advanced, the crowd was dispersed, and the fire nearly extinguished, some of the imperial guards, in making their rounds, discovered her. They roughly demanded why she remained abroad at so late an hour. The stern looks and fierce manners of these soldiers overpowered her with terror. Incapacitated from uttering a syllable, she burst into an agony of tears. The soldiers, little affected at seeing her weep, assembled round her, repeating, with rude familiarity, their question. The trembling girl, at last recovering sufficient courage to answer, in a voice broken with sobs, said that she came from beyond Tobolsk, to petition of the Emperor pardon for her father; "I have performed the whole journey on foot," continued she, "and, having no money, I cannot obtain a shelter for the night." At

these words the soldiers burst into a loud laugh, and taxed her with falsehood. Elizabeth, more terrified than ever, sought to escape, but they would not suffer it, and insolently seized her. "Oh my God, oh my father!" she cried in accents of horror and despair, "will not you come to my succour? have you forsaken the wretched Elizabeth?" During this debate some persons of the lower class, attracted by the noise, had assembled in groups; and, by loud murmurs, expressed their disapprobation at the cruelty of the soldiers. Elizabeth stretched towards them her hands, in act of supplication. "Before Heaven," said she, "I solemnly protest that I have uttered nothing but the truth. I come from beyond Tobolsk, to implore pardon for my father; save me, save me; and let me not die, till, at least, I have obtained it." These words touched every heart. Several persons advanced to her assistance, and one of them, addressing the soldiers, said, "I keep the Inn of St. Basil in this square; let the girl come with me; her story appears to be true; I will give her a lodging." The soldiers, who had begun to be somewhat softened by her distress, consented to his request, and withdrew.

The grateful Elizabeth embraced the knees of her preserver. He raised her kindly from the ground, and, desiring her to follow him, led the way to his dwelling, which was at a little distance. "I have not a room to give you," said he, "there is not one in my house unoccupied; but my wife will receive you into hers for one night. She is kind and compassionate, and will readily endure so small an inconvenience to serve you." Elizabeth, trembling and agitated, followed in silence. Her guide conducted her to a small room, in which a young woman, with an infant in her arms, was seated near a stove: she rose up on seeing them. Her husband informed her from what danger he had rescued the unfortunate girl; adding that he had promised to shelter her, at least, for the night. The young woman expressed her satisfaction, and, taking Elizabeth by the hand, said, with a smile of encouragement, "Be comforted, we will take good care of you, but never stay out so late again. In large towns such as this, it is very dangerous for females of your age to be found at a late hour in the streets." Elizabeth answered that she had no asylum to resort to. Every door had been closed against her. She

owned her poverty without a blush, and related all the hardships she had so heroically sustained. Her hosts wept at the recital; neither of them thought of doubting her veracity. The emotions which her story excited afforded a proof that it was true. The classes of society to which they belonged are not so easily misled by brilliant fictions; these soar beyond their capacities, while over their souls, truth, in all its purity, preserves its claims entire.

At the conclusion of Elizabeth's narrative, Jaques Rossi, the innkeeper, said to her, "My influence in this town is but small, but, as far as it can be exerted for my own interest, it shall be for yours." His wife pressed his hand in token of approbation; and asked Elizabeth if she knew no one who could present her to the Emperor. "No," she replied, not wishing to mention young Smoloff, lest she should involve him in some difficulty; besides no assistance could be expected from him, since he was in Livonia. "No matter," said the wife of Rossi, "the most powerful recommendation to our great sovereign is virtue in distress, and that will plead for you."—"Yes," interrupted her husband, "the Emperor Alexander is to be

crowned to-morrow in the church of the Assumption. You must place yourself in his way, and, at his feet, must solicit the remission of your father's sentence. I will accompany and encourage you."—"Oh, my generous benefactors!" exclaimed Elizabeth, clasping her hands with an expression of the liveliest gratitude, "Heaven beholds your kindness, and my parents will invoke blessings on you for it: you will conduct me to the feet of the Emperor, and will support me in his presence—perhaps you will be witnesses of my happiness—of the greatest happiness a human being is capable of enjoying. If it be granted me to obtain my father's pardon, to be the joyful bearer of the happy tidings to him and to my mother, to behold their delight—"

She was unable to proceed: the idea of such felicity almost forbade the hope that it might be realized. She could not believe that her deserts entitled her to expect it. The panegyrics, however, which her host bestowed upon the clemency of Alexander; the various anecdotes they recorded in evidence of the truth upon which these commendations were founded; and the grace with which the value of those acts of mercy

had been enhanced, reanimated her spirits. Elizabeth listened to them with eagerness. She would gladly have spent the whole night in hearing them repeated; but, as it grew late, her kind hosts wished her to enjoy some repose, that she might be the better enabled to support the exertions of the morrow. Rossi retired to a small apartment at the top of the house, and his wife shared her bed with Elizabeth.

It was long before the perturbation of her mind would permit her to sleep. She was thankful to Heaven even for her sufferings, since the excess of them had heightened the value of the generous hospitality she had experienced: "Had I been less miserable," thought she, "this good man would not perhaps have taken pity on me." When overcome by sleep, visions of happiness, in various forms, fled before her. Sometimes fancy presented her parents, their countenances irradiated with joy: sometimes she imagined the voice of the Emperor, addressing her, in terms of approbation and compliance with her entreaties; and sometimes another form presented itself to her imagination, but under characters more vague and indistinct; a mist seemed to obscure it

from her sight, and the impression that it left upon her heart was the only trace that remained.

On the morrow, as soon as the thunder of the artillery, the beating of the drums, and the loud acclamations of the people announced the dawn of the joyful day, Elizabeth, habited in a dress lent to her by her kind hostess, and leaning upon the arm of Rossi, joined the crowd which followed the procession to the large church of the Assumption, where the coronation was to be performed.

More than a thousand tapers illuminated the holy temple, which was decorated in all the splendour of Eastern magnificence. Upon a dazzling throne, beneath a canopy of rich velvet, were seated the Emperor and his youthful consort, habited in sumptuous dresses, which, displaying to advantage the beauty of their forms, gave to their appearance an air almost celestial. Kneeling before her august spouse, the Empress received from his hand the imperial diadem, and encircled her brow with this pledge of their eternal union. Opposite to the royal pair, and in the sacred chair of truth, was the venerable Plato, the Patriarch of Moscow

who, in a discourse at once pathetic and sublime, recalled to the youthful mind of Alexander the great duties annexed to royalty, and the awful responsibility imposed upon his elevated station, in return for the pomp that environed it, and the power with which it was invested. Amidst the assemblage of nations which thronged the cathedral, he pointed out to him the hunters of Kamtschatka,* bringing tributes of skins from the Aleutsky Isles,† which border on America; the merchants of Archangel,‡ loaded with

* The Kamtschadales, or inhabitants of Kamtschatka, possess a lively imagination, an excellent memory, and a peculiar readiness in imitating what they see others do. Hunting and fishing are their principal occupations. The dog is their favourite domestic animal. They travel in little carts, drawn by dogs, and are in general extremely superstitious.

† The Aleutian, or Aleutsky Islands. This is the name given to that chain of islands which extends from the north of Kamtschatka to the continent of America, and which, in reality, is only a branch of the mountains of Kamtschatka. They were discovered a short time after the island of Behring. The word Aleut signifies a bald or naked rock. Those islands which are nearest to America are known by the name of Andreanofskoi and the Fox Islands.

‡ Archangel is a considerable town of Russia, the capital of the government of the same name, situated on the White Sea, at the mouth of one of the branches of the Dwina, which forms its port, in lat. 64° 34' N. and long. 38° 55' E. The port of Archangel was the only one by which Russia

rich commodities which their vessels had brought from every quarter of the globe; the Samoyeds,* a rude and unpolished people, who come from the mouth of the Genissy,† a country condemned to the rigours of an eternal winter, where the beauteous flower of the spring and the rich produce of harvest are alike unknown; and the natives of Astracan,‡ whose fertile fields yield melons,

could communicate by sea, with the rest of Europe, before Peter the Great had founded St. Petersburg. Its commerce is still very important.

* The Samoyeds are a Tartar people, who inhabit the north of Russia between Asiatic Tartary and the government of Archangel along the sea-coast, as far as Siberia. They subsist by hunting and fishing like the Kamtschadales.

† The Yenisey, called Kem by the Tartars and Moguls, and Gub, or Khases, which signifies the Great River, by the Ostiacks, is formed by two rivers, the Kamsara and the Veikem, which take their course in Chinese Soongory. After a long course towards the north, it falls into the Frozen Ocean. Its banks are lined with high rocky mountains; it forms several islands, has cataracts between the towns of Yeniseisk and Krennoyarsk, and abounds in fish of every species.

‡ Astracan is a considerable town of Asiatic Russia, the capital of the government of Caucasus, which anciently formed an independent kingdom, called the kingdom of Astracan. It stands on an island, which the Volga forms near its mouth in the Caspian Sea, in lat. 46° 20' N. and long. 48° 2' E. It is said to contain more than 70,000 inhabitants, twenty-five Russian churches, two convents, many chapels belonging to the Armenians, Lutherans, and

figs, and grapes of exquisite flavour: he showed him, lastly, the inhabitants of the shores of the Black* and Caspian Seas, and of the great Tartary, which, bounded by Persia, China, and the Empire of the Moguls,† extending from the extremity of the western hemisphere to that of the east, occupies nearly half the globe. "Sovereign of the most extensive empire of the earth," said he, "you who are this day about to take the awful oath of presiding over the destinies of a state which includes a fifth part of the known world; bear it ever in remembrance that you have to answer at the tribunal of Divine Justice for the fate of millions of your fellow-creatures; and that an injustice, through your neglect, done to the meanest among them, must be accounted

Roman Catholics, and even an Indian temple. Its circumference is three miles.

* The Black Sea, anciently the Pontus Euxinus, bathes the Russian governments of the Taurida, the Caucasus, and Ekatarinoslof. Its principal ports are Kaffa or Theodosia, Sebastopol, Koslof, and Balaklava.

† The empire of the Moguls is that vast empire in the East Indies, founded by Tamerlane, but which, after the invasion of Kouli Khan, in 1739, became the prey of its Soubahs, Nabobs, and other Mohammedan governors. Its internal divisions have fixed the establishments of the English in Hindoostan on bases which appear immovable.

for at the final day of retribution." At these words the heart of the young Emperor appeared to be sensibly affected: but there was one, among the auditors, whose heart was not less affected than his; that of the suppliant who was come to solicit the remission of a father's sentence.

At the moment when Alexander began to pronounce the solemn oath which was to bind him to devote his future life to the happiness of his people, the enraptured Elizabeth imagined she heard the voice of mercy requiring him to break the chains of every unfortunate being within his dominions. Unable any longer to command her feelings, and, aided by a supernatural strength, she pierced the crowd, and, forcing a passage through the lines of the soldiers, rushed towards the throne, exclaiming, "Mercy! mercy!" The vehemence of her supplication interrupted the ceremony, and occasioned so much confusion that the guards advanced, and, notwithstanding her entreaties, and the efforts of Jaques, dragged her out of the church. The Emperor, however, would not, on so glorious a day, be invoked in vain. He ordered one of the officers of his suite to inquire what it was that the petitioner

wanted. The officer obeyed; he quitted the church in haste, and heard the imploring accent of the agonized suppliant, still endeavouring to prevail with the soldiers to allow her to return. He started, quickened his pace, saw who it was, recognised the daughter of the exile, and exclaimed, "It is she, it is Elizabeth!" Elizabeth turned: she could scarcely give credit to so much happiness; could scarcely believe that Smoloff was there to save her father. Yet it was his voice, his features; she could not be mistaken. Joy deprived her of utterance, and she stretched her arms towards him, as to a messenger sent from Heaven to her relief. He rushed forward, seized her hand, and, in his turn, began to doubt the testimony of his senses. "Elizabeth," he exclaimed, "is it indeed you? or do I behold a vision from Heaven? Speak, whence do you come?"—"From Tobolsk."—"From Tobolsk! and have you travelled hither, alone, and on foot?"—"Yes," she exclaimed, "I came to entreat pardon for my father, and they force me from the presence of the Emperor."—"I will reconduct you to his presence," interrupted the transported Smoloff; "I will present you to him: he will

not resist your supplications: your prayer will be granted." Smoloff then dispersed the soldiers, and led Elizabeth back towards the church. The imperial procession was, at that instant, issuing from the great gate of the cathedral. As soon as the monarch appeared, Smoloff, holding Elizabeth by the hand, forced a passage through the guards, and threw himself with her at the Emperor's feet; "Sire," he cried, "vouchsafe to listen to the voice of suffering virtue; behold the daughter of the unfortunate Stanislaus Potowski;* she has come from the deserts of Ischim, where her parents have for twelve

* There is some inconvenience in romances which are founded in history, in employing well-known names and remarkable eras. The Powtowska, or, according to the true orthography, Potocka family, was indeed one of the most illustrious in Poland, and a member of that family really fell a victim, in Russia, to his patriotic courage: but it was Count Ignacio Potocky, and not Stanislaus. He was not sent into Siberia, but confined in the dungeons of a very rigorous state prison with the brave Kosciusko, and it was the Empress Catharine II. who placed him there. He was liberated, as well as his companion in misfortune, by the son of that Empress, the Emperor Paul, who, from the first day of his reign, went to visit the noble martyrs of Polish liberty, and broke their chains.

The young girl who really accomplished two thousand four hundred English miles alone, on foot, to solicit the pardon of her father at St. Petersburg, belonged to no distinguished family. Her name was Praskowja Lupolowa

years languished in exile. She has had no guide nor protector; has performed the journey on foot, begging her bread, and braving scorn and misery, snow and tempests, every danger and every fatigue, to implore, of your majesty, forgiveness for her father." Elizabeth raised her clasped hands towards Heaven, repeating the last words, "Forgiveness for my father!" A clamour of admiration arose from among the crowd! The Emperor himself joined in it; and deeply rooted as his prejudices had been against Stanislaus Potowsky, in an instant they were totally effaced. He could not hesitate to believe that the father of a daughter so virtuous must be innocent of the crimes alleged against him; but, had it been otherwise, Alexander would not have withheld forgiveness. "The pardon is granted," said he; "your father is free." Elizabeth heard no more; at the word pardon, joy overpowered her, and she fell senseless into the arms of Smoloff. In this state she was carried, through an immense crowd, who opened a passage, shouting with joyful acclamations of approbation at the transcendent virtue of

She died at Novogorod in 1810, six years after her generous devotion. Her father was exiled into Siberia in 1798.

the heroine, and the clemency of the monarch, and was conveyed back to the house of the benevolent Rossi.

After recovering her senses, the first object that met her eyes was Smoloff, kneeling beside her: the first sound she heard was that of a repetition from his lips of the words used by the Emperor; "Elizabeth, the pardon is granted, your father is free." For some moments it was by looks only that she could express her joy and gratitude; but they expressed more than language could have imparted. At length, turning to Smoloff, she pronounced, in a faltering voice, the names of her father and mother: "We shall again behold them, then," said she; "we shall enjoy the sight of their happiness." These words sunk deeply into the heart of him to whom they were addressed. Elizabeth had not said that she loved him; but she had associated him with the first sentiment of her soul, with that object of felicity, in which all her ideas and all her hopes so long had centred. From that happy moment Smoloff ventured to indulge a hope, that she would, on a future day consent to realize his happiness.

XII.

SEVERAL days elapsed before the deed of pardon could be drawn up and signed. Previously to its final accomplishment it was requisite to inquire into the causes of Potowsky's condemnation; and the investigation proved so favourable to the noble Polander, that equity alone would have authorized the Emperor to break the chains of the illustrious patriot. But he had listened to the dictates of clemency before he knew what those of justice required; an act of generosity which those whom he thus nobly pardoned never forgot.

One morning Smoloff called on Elizabeth at an earlier hour than he had before presumed to visit her, and presented to her parchment with the imperial seal. "Behold," said he, "the mandate in which the Emperor commands my father to restore liberty to yours." Elizabeth seized the parchment, and, pressing it to her lips, bathed it with tears. "This is not all," continued Smoloff. "our magnanimous sovereign performs a noble action in a manner worthy of himself. He restores to your father his dignities, his

rank, his property : all those honours which elevate man in the estimation of his fellows, but which can never elevate Elizabeth. The courier who is to convey the order to Tobolsk departs to-morrow, and I have obtained permission from the Emperor to accompany him."——"And may not I also accompany him?" eagerly interrupted Elizabeth. "Unquestionably," resumed Smoloff, "and from your lips only your father must learn that he is free. Presuming upon my knowledge of your sentiments, I told the Emperor that it was your wish to be yourself the bearer of the joyful intelligence. He approved the design, and charged me with the commission of informing you that you have leave to depart to-morrow in one of his carriages, attended by two female domestics; and he has sent a purse of two thousand rubles to defray the expenses of your journey." Elizabeth, fixing her eyes thoughtfully on Smoloff, replied, "From the day on which I first saw you, to the present hour, I do not recollect that I have obtained a single benefit of which you have not been the author. Without your assistance, I could not have obtained my father's pardon; without your generous interference, never would he have beheld his

country again: to you then it belongs to tell him he is free: this glorious recompense alone is adequate to your benefits."—"No, Elizabeth," replied Smoloff, "that happiness must be yours; the recompense to which I aspire is still greater."—"Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Elizabeth, "what higher reward can there be?" Smoloff was on the point of answering in terms expressive of the rapture he felt; but, repressing his emotion, he coloured, and cast his eyes upon the ground. An interval of silence ensued; at length, in a faltering voice, Smoloff answered, "Elizabeth, I must not tell you but in the presence of your father."

From the time that Smoloff had so unexpectedly found Elizabeth, he had not suffered a single day to pass without seeing her, without remaining in her company for many successive hours; without discovering some new reason for loving her more ardently than before. But never had he deviated for a moment from the respect he owed her. She was at a distance from her parents; she looked to him alone for protection; and the valuable deposit, thus entrusted to his charge, he considered so sacred, that he could not have prevailed with himself to utter any

sentiment that had the least tendency to excite emotion either in her countenance or her heart.

During the long journey they had to perform, he preserved the same respectful silence. Constantly seated by her, beholding her, hearing her, his passion continued to increase, but never overcame his resolution. He bestowed upon her always the appellation of sister; and, though his attentions were more assiduous than those of the fondest brother, they were not the less innocent; they were calculated to inspire confidence in the most scrupulous delicacy, and must have satisfied expectations the most unbounded. His sentiments were only perceptible in the attempts that he made to conceal them; friendship seemed to prompt all he uttered; in his silence alone could his love be discovered.

Before she quitted Moscow, Elizabeth liberally rewarded her generous hosts; nor, on recrossing the Wolga, at Casan, was she unmindful of Kisloff the waterman. She inquired for him, and was informed, that, in consequence of a serious accident, he had been reduced to the lowest state of poverty, and was languishing on a sick bed, sur-

rounded by six children, who were in want of food. Elizabeth requested to be immediately conducted to his habitation. When he before saw her, it was in poverty, in dejection, and clothed in rags; now that he beheld her in splendour, with joy and animation sparkling in her eyes, and diffusing a brilliancy over her whole appearance, he was unable to recognise her. Elizabeth took from her purse the little coin which he had given her, and, showing it to him, brought to his memory the act of kindness he had performed; then, laying a hundred rubles upon his bed, she added, "Charity fails not to reap its reward; behold that which you gave me, Heaven now returns a hundred fold."

Elizabeth was so eager to rejoin her parents, that she travelled night and day. On her arrival at Sarapol, notwithstanding her haste, she stopped to visit the tomb of the missionary. As this was a tribute of grateful veneration, almost equivalent to an act of filial duty, Elizabeth could not let it pass unfulfilled. She beheld once more the cross, with the inscription which she had engraved upon it. Again she wept over that grave where she had formerly shed so many bitter tears; but these she now shed were

the tears of soothing consolation. She imagined, that, in that celestial paradise, of which he was now a blessed inhabitant, the missionary partook of her felicity ; and that, in his soul, so full of benevolence, her happiness added to the happiness which he enjoyed in the bosom of his God.

But I hasten to bring my story to a conclusion ; and, with Elizabeth, to reach the dwelling where the days of her absence were numbered with excessive anxiety. I will not attempt a description of the scene of joy exhibited at Tobolsk, when young Smoloff presented Elizabeth to his father ; and she, in all the effusions of her grateful heart, acknowledged the blessings she owed to his assistance. Elizabeth would not consent to let her parents be informed of her approach. She learned at Tobolsk that they were well, and this information was further confirmed at Saimka. Wishing agreeably to surprise them, she proceeded, with a palpitating heart, to their cottage, attended only by Smoloff. What varying emotions agitated her as she crossed the forest, drew near the banks of the lake, and recognised every tree and every rock, adjacent to the habitation of her parents ! At last she caught sight of

the paternal roof; she rushed forward; but the violence of her feelings obliged her to stop. Alas! behold the state of human nature! we seek for happiness in excess of joy; which excess, more violent in its effects than that of misery, we are not able to bear. Elizabeth, leaning upon the arm of Smoloff, faintly uttered, "If I should find my mother ill." The fear of such a calamity moderated the happiness which had overwhelmed her, and recovered all her strength. Again she ran: she reached the threshold: she heard the sound of well-known voices, and called to her parents in an ecstacy which almost deprived her of sense. The door was opened, and her father appeared. At the cry he uttered her mother rushed out, and Elizabeth, unable to support herself, fell into their extended arms. "It is Elizabeth," exclaimed Smoloff, "she is bearer of your pardon: she has triumphed over every obstacle, and has attained, from the generosity of the Emperor, even more than she had expected." These words added not to the joy of the delighted parents: every sensation was absorbed in that all-powerful one of happiness in again beholding their child. She was restored; and this was, to

them, the greatest blessing on earth. Long did they remain in a delirium of joy which could admit of no increase. A few unconnected sentences escaped from their lips, but they knew not what they uttered. In vain did they seek for words to express the feelings that overpowered them; by tears and by looks only could they make themselves understood; and their strength, as well as their reason, began to fail under excess of joy.

Smoloff prostrated himself at the feet of Stanislaus and Phedora. "Oh," he exclaimed, "condescend, in this moment of your bliss, to regard me also as your child. Hitherto Elizabeth has condescended to distinguish me by the affectionate name of brother; but now, perhaps, she will permit me to aspire to a title still more endearing."

Elizabeth seized a hand of each of her parents; and, regarding them with looks of the tenderest affection, she thus spoke: "Without the aid of M. de Smoloff I should not perhaps have been here. It was he who conducted me into the presence of the Emperor, who advocated my cause, who solicited your forgiveness, and who obtained it. It is

he who has been so zealously instrumental in restoring you to your rights, and who has reconducted me to the bosom of my beloved parents. Oh, my mother, instruct me how to convince him of my gratitude! teach me, my father, how to requite it!" Phedora, embracing her daughter, answered, "You must convince him of your gratitude by bestowing upon him your love; a love like that which you have seen me bear to your father." Stanislaus, interrupting her, exclaimed, in an accent of enthusiasm, "Oh! my Phedora, who can appreciate the gift of a heart like thine! It is above all value. But, on such an occasion as this, the generosity of Elizabeth cannot be too great." Elizabeth, uniting the hand of Smoloff with the hands of her parents, said to him, with a look of fascinating innocence and with the most modest timidity, "Will you promise me—never to forsake them?"—"Oh happiness!" he exclaimed, "infinitely beyond my desert. Her parents give her to me, and she consents to be mine." His rapture was such as to deprive him of further utterance; and such was the enthusiasm of his love, that, at this moment, he could scarcely imagine there was, in the disposal of Heaven, a happiness

more unmingled, a happiness which could equal that which he now enjoyed. The transports of the mother in again beholding her child; the exultation of the father, who owed, to the unprecedented efforts and magnanimity of his daughter, the recovery of his liberty, even the inexpressible satisfaction of Elizabeth herself, who had already fulfilled the most sacred of human duties, and who had evinced a virtue unparalleled, did not, in the estimation of Smoloff, appear in any degree comparable to the happiness for which he was indebted to love alone.

Were I to attempt a description of the days that followed, I would represent the fond parents informing their child of all the apprehensions, alarms, and anguish they had experienced during her long absence; I would represent them listening, with the alternate emotions of hope and fear, to the recital she gave of the diversified adventures of her long and perilous journey; I would recount the blessings which her father invoked on all who had been the friends and protectors of his child, and show the tender Phedora exhibiting the lock of hair, sent by Elizabeth, which she wore next her heart, and which enabled her to divert the painful

solicitude of many a tedious hour ; I would attempt to convey, to my readers, some idea of their feelings on that day when the exile, who brought it, presented himself at the door of the cottage, to inform them how greatly he was indebted to the generosity of their daughter ; I would endeavour to paint the grief excited by the narrative of her sufferings, and the joy which they felt upon the recital of her virtues ; and finally I would describe their departure from their rustic habitation and from the land of exile, where they had encountered so many evils, but where they had likewise experienced the greatest happiness, enhanced by the sorrows which had preceded it ; and by the tears which its acquisition had cost them ; like the sun whose rays are never more vivid and refreshing than when they penetrate the vapours which envelop him, and reflect their bright beams upon the fields and foliage bespangled with dew.

Pure and almost spotless as the angels, Elizabeth was destined to participate, on earth, a happiness resembling theirs, and like them to live in innocence and love.

Here I shall conclude ; for, when representations of human happiness are prolonged,

they become fatiguing, because they become improbable; and the moment we lose sight of probability, the narrative ceases to interest us, for we all know, from experience, that a perpetuity of bliss is not the lot of humanity; and even language, which is so copious and varied in its expression of sorrow, is poor and inadequate in the delineation of joy—one day of happiness is sufficient to exhaust them all.

I have described Elizabeth as restored to her parents. By them she is conducted into Poland, the place of her nativity, and reinstated in the exalted rank occupied by her ancestors—by them she is united to the man whom she loves—to the man whom they esteem worthy of her love.

Here then let us close the narrative, and leave her completely happy. Were I to add one page more to my story, I should be apprehensive, from my own knowledge of the vicissitudes of human life, of the crosses, the fallacious hopes, and the fugacious, as well as chimerical happiness, which mark its tenor, that I might have some misfortune to recount; for temporal happiness is never of long duration.



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